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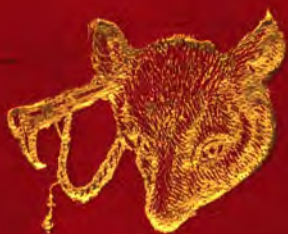
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THE
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OF



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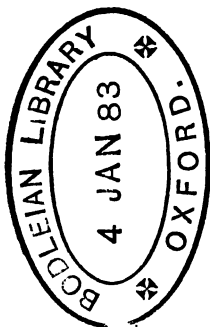


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THE
HUNTING COUNTRIES
OF
ENGLAND,

THEIR FACILITIES, CHARACTER, AND REQUIREMENTS.

A GUIDE TO HUNTING MEN.



BY BROOKSBY.

PART IV.



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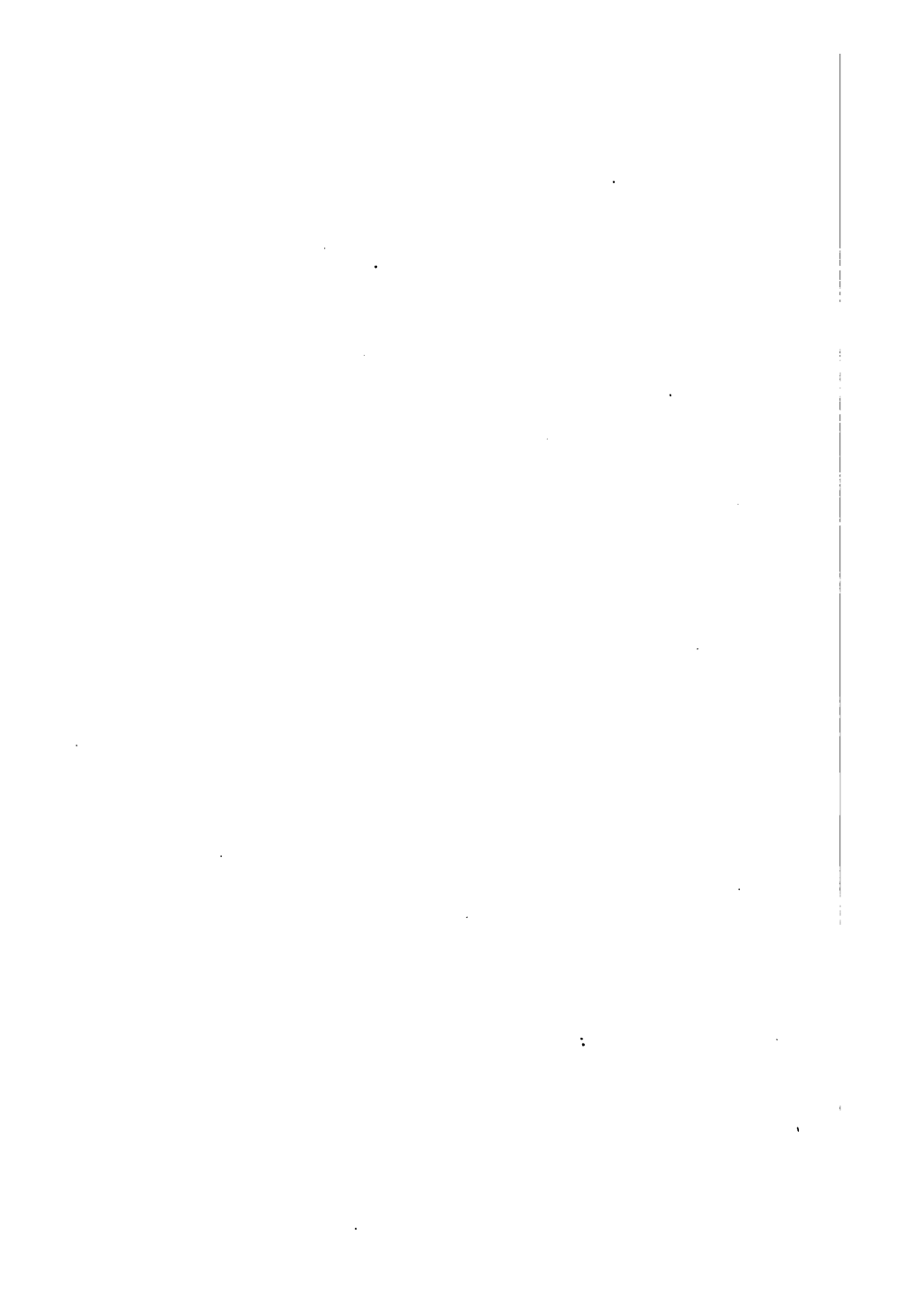
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for present republication.*



HUNTING COUNTRIES

OF

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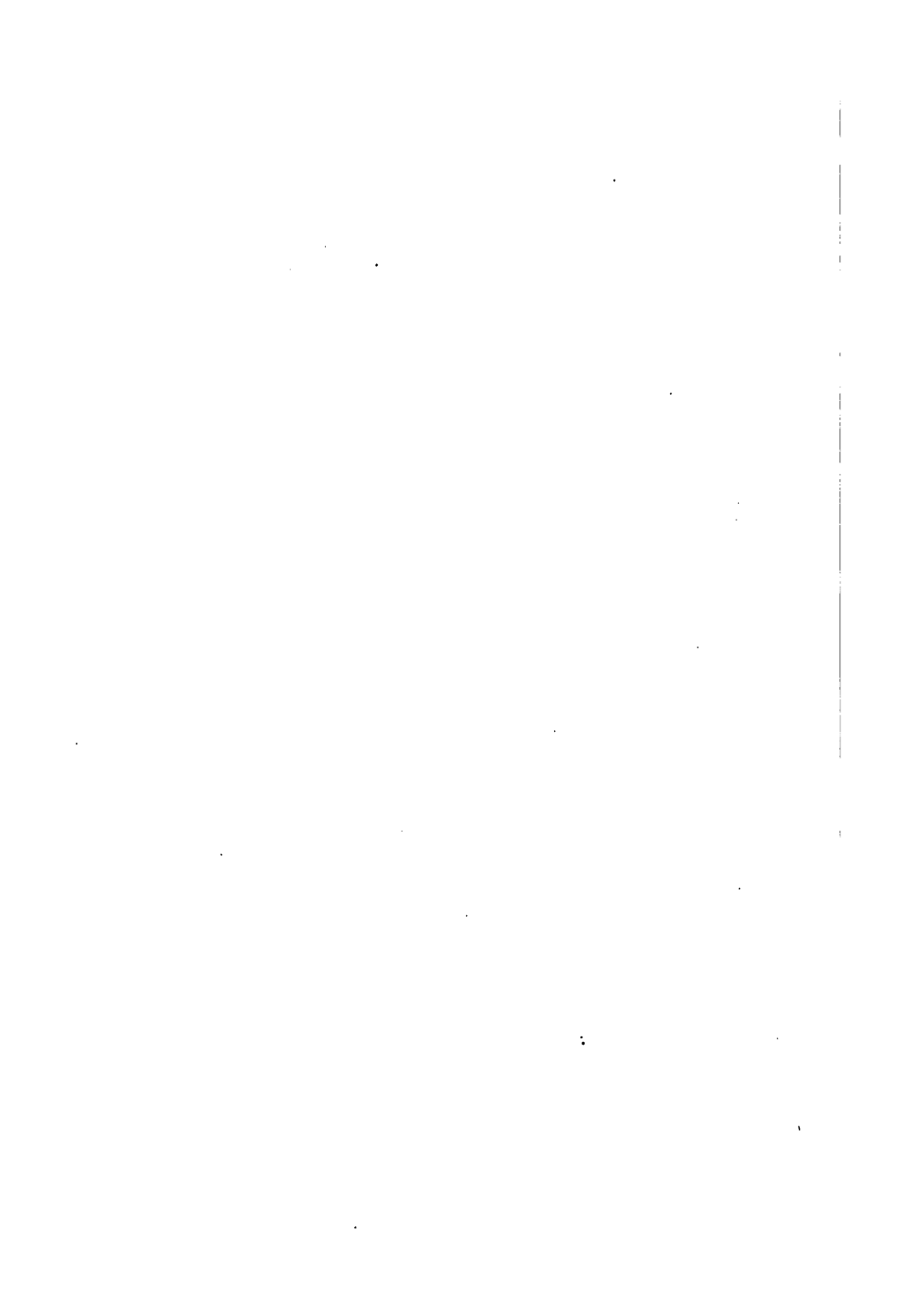
VOL. II.

PART IV.

THE BADSWORTH.*

NORTH of the Grove and South of the Bramham Moor, the Badsworth Hunt vies with the latter Hunt and Lord Fitzwilliam in pushing foxhunting as far as possible into the western wilds and coalpits of Yorkshire. An old country, of long-established repute and sporting history, it has suffered, and is suffering, much, under the relentless strides of trade development; year by year the area for the horse and hound is more narrowed; year by year more lines cross the face of the country, and its best features become more seared and distorted. Yet it holds its head up bravely; maintains an establishment of the highest class; and takes the field as often and fully as

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 9, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.



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efficiently as ever. To be plain, the Badsworth Country, once almost the pick of Yorkshire, is now so cut to pieces and harassed by the encroachments of railways competing in the coal-and-iron interest, that it has lost much of the free open character which constituted its charm. This will be patent enough in a glance at the map; and, besides all the havoc that is there denoted by the red lines marking railways of varied denomination, still another steam-track is in progress to connect Hull and Barnsley, and to spoil the pleasant district of which Hemsworth is the centre.

While the map is in your hand you may note the surroundings of the Badsworth. East and south its boundaries are pretty nearly delineated by the course of the Don. The Aire river separates it on the north from the Bramham Moor; and it may go as far as it can to the westward, where Huddersfield and its busy populace check it at one point and hilly moorland meets it at another. From Doncaster to Wakefield, gives the best general idea of the locale of the Hunt; and whoever has seen a Leger run, or even read the yearly accounts of it, must be well aware that this is, to say the least, a well-populated district. The "tyke" is admittedly a sporting animal; but his presence, in too great force, must necessarily be rather against, than in favour of, the prospects of sport. He comes out in prominent strength—himself on foot, his superior officers on horseback, whenever hounds are in his neighbourhood and sufficient excuse is found available for breaking into the week's work. This is specially the case on a Saturday, when if he

did not go a hunting, he would probably be driven to the skittle-ground to kill the day : and consequently on a Saturday Wakefield, Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster and Pontefract turn him and his masters in great numbers to the hunting-field.

The Badsworth Hunt dates as far back as 1720 ; and the present pack (the property of the country) was founded in 1817 by Mr. Thomas Hodgson, from the Kennels of Lord Lonsdale, Lord Yarborough, Sir Bellingham Graham, Mr. Fox, Mr. Villebois, Lord Fitzwilliam, etc. etc. Just previous to this period, Mr. Chaworth Musters (*grandpère*), and Sir Bellingham Graham had each brought his pack to the country for a couple of seasons.

There are now some sixty couple of hounds in the kennels at Badsworth, about three miles from Pontefract. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday are the hunting days—with an occasional bye-day, which the Master takes himself with a pack of which the nucleus is kept for this special purpose. Mr. Wright assumed the Mastership on the death of Mr. Hope-Barton in 1876 ; manages the country and maintains the establishment with the greatest liberality. It is safe to say that no M.F.H. in England keeps up a stable of such proportions. He has sometimes no less than a hundred and twenty horses in his stable !

The country, like most of Yorkshire, acknowledges to a good deal of plough—though it is by no means entirely arable, nor is this arable particularly holding. On the whole it is a fair scenting country, especially on the east and west, where it treats itself more freely

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to grass of one kind or another. Its coverts are chiefly natural, though several nice new gorses have lately been planted in the low ground to the east. The frequency and propinquity of the coverts in many parts of the country make killing a fox often a matter of difficulty—though this is a difficulty that may arise anywhere from the blessing of plenty of foxes.

The fences of the country by no means come under any single classification; but can best be alluded to in touching upon the various districts. It seems to us, however, that all over Yorkshire a habit exists of digging the ditches very wide and deep.

The country naturally divides itself into four sections, differing considerably in soil, surface, and character generally.

First, the east, or "low country," is wild, flat, half-drained, in parts nearly all rough grass (especially about Fishlake)—with unkempt ragged fences and ditches that are never cleaned or cared for. More sport is seen here than in any other part of the Badsworth territory, for there is generally a capital scent and the foxes are stout and straight. Here and there a big open drain is met with—putting a strong test upon horse and rider. Still, a clean-cut drain is often a pleasanter fence than a brook two feet less in breadth. For, while the former declares itself honestly and throws down a fair challenge to a horse's jumping power, the latter not only varies in width every few yards, but its banks are often treacherous, rotten or shelving. The one you can ride at knowing that if you can clear a certain

number of feet you are safe over; the other is frequently a trap which is especially laid for the confident and well mounted. The Lake drain is a notable instance of the former jump; and holds a place in the Hunt much akin to that of the Whis-sendine with the Cottessmore.

There are many strong good coverts in the "low country"—woods of manageable size. Among these are Blane Woods and Blane-Hall Wood (Mr. Bateson Yarborough's), Fenwick (Mr. F. B. Frank's), the Wolmersley coverts (Lady Hawke's), and the Owston Woods (Mr. P. B. Cooke's). There is also a fine gorse covert at Fishlake, the property of Lord Houghton, and productive of much good sport. The chief meets are Balne Cross Roads, Womersley, Askern, and Moss—the last three being stations on the encroaching lines of railway, and Monday or Thursday is the day for this side.

Secondly, round Doncaster is light undulating plough on limestone, carrying scarcely so good a scent except in wet weather, but with capital woods for shelter. The meets are Robin Hood's Well, Marr, Red House, &c., and the principal coverts are those of Mr. G. C. Yarborough's at Barnsdale, Skelbrook (Mr. Neville's), Brodsworth Woods (Mr. Thelluson's), the Melton Woods (Mr. Montague's), and Burgwallis (Mr. Anne's).

Thirdly, or in continuation of the centre of the country, is the Hemsworth district, where a better soil and a greater sprinkling of grass is to be found. The neighbourhood of Shafton is particularly good, and in the Hunt is spoken of as a mimic Leicester-

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shire. Hemsworth Station is a very favourite meet; and used always to be on a Saturday, but a change of days is said to be in contemplation. From this fixture Hagg Wood (Mr. C. Fitzwilliam's), Sir Lionel's Gorse, or the Shafton Gorses (Lord Galway's) may be drawn. Other meets are Shafton Two Gates, Ackworth Moor Tops, Ringstone Hill, &c., and other coverts are Chevet (Sir Lionel Pilkington's), Hoar Park, Nostell (Mr. R. Winn's), Frystone (Lord Houghton's), Badsworth (Mr. R. H. Jones'), Burnt Wood (Mr. Dymond's), New Park Spring (Mr. Foljambe's), Hootan Wood (Mr. Warde Aldam's), and Stapleton (Mrs. Barton's).

The fourth section of the country is the west, which is hilly and thickly wooded, and owns to a fair proportion of grass. It is very necessary here to be mounted on a horse that will jump a stone wall, which is a frequent fence in the neighbourhood. And especially is this the case should a fox take you straight for the moors, over the wild open country intervening. In January, 1880, a notable instance of such a run was sketched in *The Field*. On the occasion alluded to they ran a ten-mile point from Haigh Wood, hounds going on with their fox till at the end of three hours they were lost in the darkness, thirty miles from home. This western district is now thickly populated by colliers—a keen breed of sportsmen, or, as they term themselves, “pure hunters”—who will often turn out to run for miles with hounds. The principal western meets are Cawthorne, Woolley Edge, Darton, and Haigh Station; and these are usually on a Monday. The chief coverts are Bretton (Mr. W. B. Beaumont's),

Cawthorne (Mr. W. S. Stanhope's), and Woolley (Mr. G. Wentworth's).

Should you be minded to see the Badsworth at work, Doncaster or Pontefract offers the most commanding points and the best accommodation. The Great Northern will land you at either in three hours and a half to four hours from London. A hunter, strong and well bred, is necessary in the Badsworth country throughout; and the natives have always shown themselves equal to the occasion by breeding horses of this type for their own riding. Of late years, however, the farmers of Yorkshire, as everywhere else, have been glad to dispose of anything worth the attention of the extraneous buyer; and are much less frequently seen riding horses of the stamp and quality for which the county has been so famous. Indeed, fewer farmers are seen out hunting at all now than in former years; and, altogether, the Badsworth field is generally a limited one, except, as above-mentioned, on holiday Saturday.

It should be noted, as a feature of the country, that the River Went almost bisects it in its course from west to east. Only near its source is it comfortably jumpable. Soon afterwards it developes to proportions demanding ford or bridge, and constituting a source of anxiety when hounds are seen to be heading towards it.

THE SOUTHDOWN.*

THE Londoner may fix upon many a worse quarter whence to enjoy his two or three days hunting in the week than Brighton—little as we are accustomed to associate that tripper's Paradise with vigorous field-sports. 'Tis of foxhunting, of course, we are about to speak; for, while in no way holding with Mr. Jorrocks' graphically-expressed contempt for "currant-jelly dogs"—on the contrary, believing in them heartily as the young foxhunter's best instructors—we hold harehunting to be a sport without a literature. "Puss 'unting"—once more to borrow a phrase out of the mouth of the immortal one—is not a thrilling pursuit in the abstract. Even the chronicle of a fine run necessarily reads about as exciting as those mysterious records which reach us now and again from St. Andrews or Westward Ho—where Jamie Junr. has dribbled a ball in and out of a series of little holes in the ground, in fewer strokes than on any previous occasion in the stirring annals of golf. There may be something harrier-like in the atmosphere of Brighton—and much that is creditable in the connection. But

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 22, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

this is not our present subject. The professed theme under the head of Hunting Countries is how to lead the Londoner afield for recreation or residence. And so we come to Brighton to quaff ozone, tempered, as taste may prompt, by Zoedone or Perrier Jouet—and to take our turn with the Southdown. Hire if you like at Brighton. It is cheap in the short run, if not in the long. A hireling is the best of mounts over a Down country. His life has been spent in one continued gallop with a loose rein. He has learned the limit of his powers, or inclination, and will not go one stride beyond either. In the after-glow of a gallop on a hireling you may dine like a Briton; have no care while you sip your coffee as to whether your recent mount is eating his corn, and in the morning know no agony over filled legs or fevered frame. The sovereigns (often four now where it used to be two—though the Brighton and Lewes tariff remains, I believe, unaltered) are the only blurr upon a pleasant past. R.M.D.—a short quick process—cheap and often disagreeable. Ask the British Subaltern on his return from a spree. Ask the man who backs favourites. A quick settlement, and sober method. This the moral. The practice advocated in the special instance is, after all—Keep your own horses wherever you are. Put up with your lame ones and your disappointments. Admit to yourself as much as you please that, when things go wrong (and when *don't* they go wrong in a hunting establishment except when owner doesn't care if he stays at home or not?) that you are the one unlucky man in the world—howl to yourself if you like that Fortune has for years been

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picking you out as her special victim. Yet depend upon it you are better off relying upon yourself, though you may have to grind your teeth through many a crisis. Only stable philosophy this—though no restriction is placed upon its being applied to every-day life, and no patent has been taken out for the principle.

Brighton, as everyone knows, is little more than an hour's journey from London; and the Southdown will give you either a scurry over the open downs, which stretch some thirty-five or forty miles from Shoreham to Eastbourne, or more solid foxhunting in the stiff vale farther inland. A racing burst over the hills—a flying scent and never a fence—is a thing almost of itself. The Gorse coverts lie in many instances three or four miles apart, and invariably hold foxes. Hounds seldom fail to get away at their fox's brush; the downs almost always carry a scent; and thus a point-to-point race is the ordinary result—he who can, with judgment, gallop fastest and ride lightest being in all probability nearest to hounds, who in their turn will often more than hold their own with the horses and generally burst up their fox.

The Downs or “the hill,” and the Weald or “Low Country” are the two natural divisions of the country—the former being marked on the map as the Southdowns and stretching along the sea-coast the whole length of the country, the latter a strong clay valley divided on the north from the Crawley and Horsham by the little stream of the Adur. The Southdown country was originally a part of the East Sussex—the present line of demarcation on the east being the north road from Hailsham.

The Down meets being, with few exceptions, those nearest to Brighton, are naturally the most fully attended—even if sport is not the only influence which brings so many scarlet coats and shapely riding-habits to a meet of the foxhounds. It is pleasant to inhale the crisp breeze on the hilltop, even if you are not minded to dip into each valley and struggle over each crest in the mad rush after the spotted dogs. For many eyes too there is attraction in a red coat; but in justice to itself it should be brought home before evening has thrown a veil over window and promenade. And who shall deny that a habit is the most becoming of all garments? But, whether to sportman or loungee there should be something stirring and exhilarating in a quick sharp gallop in merry company over the smooth mossy turf, or light tilled soil almost as firm as turf, which form the surface of the downs. And the day seldom passes when the Southdown meet “on the Hill” that they cannot offer such a gallop. Should, however, a fox take it into his head, as he often will, to strike suddenly downwards off the high ground into the vale beneath, it becomes at once a question of most serious consideration as to whether you should follow hounds or not. If he is really bound for the Weald, the sooner you slide and scramble down the steep descent the better. But should he have merely taken a turn down in order to twist back again, you only put yourself completely behind by getting under the hill—which you will find impossible to re-climb again after hounds, till they are far over the brow and the order of the chase, as far as pursuers go, has been com-

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pletely reversed. More often, however, fox and hounds will run along under the hillside while you are able to gallop on the top; and the slope being quite free from timber you may see with ease all that the pack is doing. A vale fox is more likely to take to the hill than a hill fox to descend to the low country—a rule that holds good nearly everywhere. And as there are no large coverts on the downs, hounds are there generally able to account for their fox—when once they have been on terms sufficient to take the steel out of him. But in the case of the Southdown hill and vale, again, there is the attraction of the strong woods below—such as Plashet, Abbott's Wood, and Laughton on the east, and Toddington, Danny, Newtimber, and Wellingore on the west; and a woodland bred fox, found on the downs, is pretty sure to make his point back as soon as he can.

The Low Country is, to adopt a homely but not altogether inapplicable simile, as widely different from the downs as cheese is from chalk. A strong clay soil is to a great extent laid down in good honest turf; the rest is plough that rides deep and holding. For instance, both sides of the railway as you travel from Keymer Junction to Lewes are all beautiful grass; as it is also from Glynd to the Laughton Woods. Moving on by Chiddingly again we get into a stiff deep country, while on the west of Henfield district is grass and plough mixed. The large lowland coverts are mostly full of foxes—the Chiddingly neighbourhood being especially notable in this respect. The fences of the weald call for a clever horse rather than a flyer; the hedge is generally on a low bank, always

with a ditch on one side, frequently on both ; so that a horse must be able to steady himself, measure his stride accurately, and be prepared if necessary to drop his hind legs for a second spring. Field is connected with field by means of what are known as bar-ways—gateways with draw-rails, to wit.

The Southdown Hunt has lately experienced a change of mastership, and, with it, an alteration in the days of hunting. Under Mr. Streatfield, who was Master for eleven years (showing excellent sport, hounds took the field three days one week, and four the next). Under the new master, Mr. C. Brand, it is, we understand, proposed to hunt four days a week regularly. Hitherto the method of distributing the days has been much as follows—Monday and Saturday have been devoted to the weald or northern half of the country, wherein Glynd (the residence of The Speaker), Firle, Alciston, Seaford, Beddingham, Barcombe, Chailey (Mr. I. Ingram's), Newick (Mr. W. Sclater's), Street Green, &c., are frequent meets. Lord Gage is the largest landed proprietor in these parts ; is a staunch supporter of the Hunt ; and owns several of the best coverts in the Hunt, including Plashet and Abbott's Wood. Wednesday is generally spent in the south-eastern corner of the country near Eastbourne, with such meets as Polegate, Jevington, Eastbourne, East or West Dean, &c. Friday is always a Brighton meet, and means a large field, at any rate for the early part of the day. Seven miles from Brighton is about the outside distance for a ride to covert on a Friday, and brings in such fixtures as Offham (Sir G. Schiffner's), Stanmer Park (Lord Chi-

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chester's), Portslade, Erringham, the Dyke, Newmarket Arch, Newhaven, Danny Park (Mr. W. Campion's).

In conclusion, the kennels are at Ringmer, about two miles out of Lewes, which itself is a very good and central quarter whence to hunt with the South-down ; and the Hounds are the property of the Country, held as such by trustees.

THE EAST ESSEX.*

THE EAST ESSEX can scarcely be termed a "fashionable country"; but it can lay claim to being a fairly open and a very rideable one. It has plenty of nice coverts: and under the management of the late master (Col. Jelf Sharp) the stock of foxes has yearly improved. It is not so deep a country as its neighbours the Essex or the Essex Union. On the other hand it does not carry as good a scent as either. Like all the county of Essex, its entire surface is under tillage. But the steamlough is much less in use here; and its soil is naturally of a much lighter description. Light, often sandy, plough is its main characteristic; and though the crops often flourish as on a garden bed, a burning scent is a very rare phenomenon indeed. In a dry autumn or hot spring there is scarcely any scent at all; and only when the ground is completely saturated, and mud and water splash up at every stride, can hounds really run with vigour. Last season (1880—81), when soaking rain followed a long cleansing frost, the East Essex had several long and fast runs—notably in

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 17, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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their south-eastern, or Maldon district—and killed their foxes at the end. Hounds in such a country, it is needless to say, must be able to keep their noses down at all times, and puzzle the line out for themselves. And with a field of the proportions generally seen with them, they have every chance of doing it. The number of resident gentry who hunt with the East Essex is comparatively, or rather positively, small; and were it not for the farmers—men of sporting instinct and substantial means—the Hunt would lead but an attenuated existence. As it is, it leans for support upon a few large landowners, and upon the whole body of farmers throughout its length. Thirty-nine miles—from the river Blackwater and its outlet into the Mouth of the Thames in the south, up to the River Stour in the north—is its extent; while its average width, as it runs up between the territories of The Essex and the Essex and Suffolk, is about fifteen miles.

Braintree, till lately the site of the Kennels (and about an hour and three-quarters from Liverpool-street, London), is the chief centre of the Hunt—though Halstead is a place of local importance, and Witham is about half an hour nearer London. Chelmsford, which, *magnis componere parva*, may be termed the Melton of Essex, lies just outside its border, and almost at the junction point of the three Hunts (The Essex, Essex Union, and East Essex). Indeed, Chelmsford is far and away the best hunting quarter in the county. It commands the Ruthings for fox or stag, and holds all else in the province in its grasp. We are within the truth in asserting that

the hard-riding men of Essex have a very strong leaning towards "the sport incarcerate," as Mr. Burnand has termed staghunting. It gives them their gallop for certain; and is at its best when foxhunting fails. For, when the fallows are dry and they can skim the crust, staghounds leather along through the dust as heartily as foxhounds under a clearing shower and a rising glass. And Essex is very much an expeditionary ground, where men steal a day and hope for a gallop. If they get it, they go back to Town happy. How are they so likely to get it as with the staghounds (Mr. Petre's to wit); who start at a given time, with a scent that never fails—and most often, be it confessed, with a goodly luncheon to drive the laggards up to the head. It is just at the worst scenting times (autumn and spring) that Essex is at its best as a riding-ground. It is then that the fences are to be flown instead of floundered. It is then that the broad fields can be galloped, when at other times they must be trotted over. The fences almost throughout are built for a flippant style of jumping that the ground too often forbids. They ask you to go fast. The ground bids you go slow; and if you treat its advice with contempt, you may find yourself stopped altogether. Thus, when the ground is deep there is nothing for it but to go steadily and give your horse every chance of arriving at his jumps collected and unexhausted. The fences are all of one pattern—at least in the Ruthings and in the East Essex Country—viz., low hedges on little banks, with a ditch of varying width and depth on one side or the other. In most in-

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stances an ordinary hunter can fly the lot; and it seldom happens but that a fairly clever one cannot get over, either at a single spring or by making use of the bank for passing foothold. And an Essex fence has two very wholesome advantages. If it is to be jumped at all, it is probably of one calibre along its whole length: and, again, it is seldom grown of such a height that you are cut off from seeing hounds. Timber, in the form of post-and-rails, is almost unknown in Essex. Ambition may occasionally prompt the daring ones to jump a gate: but the Essex gate, though stoutly built, is by no means of such a size as is found necessary in a grazing country. A deep lane will often interrupt the even tenour of your way—calling upon you to “go round,” or to slide down a lofty bank and scramble on to a similar one beyond. But, as a rule, Essex is to be ridden over, and is an excellent school—inasmuch as the pupil is seldom called upon for stupendous effort, while the penalty of a failure is only a roll on to a soft surface, or, at most, half a sovereign invested as spade money on behalf of your horse.

Under the mastership of Col. Jelf Sharp (who, as above-mentioned, has just resigned office, after having held it for five years), hounds took the field professedly five days a fortnight. Mr. Bryce, of Durwards, near Witham, is the new Master; and the country will, we understand, in future be hunted twice a week. The kennels, too, will probably be moved elsewhere. At present they are about half a mile from Braintree, where the late master has resided. A bye-day has also been of very frequent occurrence, though the

pack (Col. Jelf Sharp's property) has only numbered about six and twenty couple of working hounds—a fair proof of good kennel management. Thus all last season when the weather allowed, hounds were out on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

The East Essex Country presents no great variety, or contrasts of feature, throughout its extent. The same kind of soil and fence is found practically everywhere. The only really big woods lie in the centre of the country; there are natural coverts of handy size scattered over the north; and perhaps the best-scenting ground is in the south-east. Foxes would seem to favour the middle and the southern half of the country in preference to the north, in spite of there not being nearly as much game for them to feed upon in the latter as in the former—an anomaly that, we have noticed, is not entirely confined to the county of Essex.

The coverts on the north are woods of a nice size—perhaps fifty to a hundred acres—at a distance from each other such as should not only admit of, but conduce towards, a run. Among the coverts in this direction are those of Burbrooke Park (Mr. Smoothey's), Twelveacres, Lord's Fields (two most useful little woods in Suffolk belonging to a good preserver, Mr. Elwes), Finchingfield, Redbeards and Grassells (under the care of Mr. Goodchild). Lord's Field, near Stoke, is the northernmost meet in the Hunt, and has led to many good runs; Steeple Bumpstead lies well in the open country, with only small coverts within hail, and every opportunity of running a long distance. The White Hart at

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Yeldham is for Redbeards and Grassels; Bulmer is a fixture more to the north-east for the good coverts in its neighbourhood.

Coming to the centre of the country, we find the biggest woodlands of the Hunt situated about midway between Braintree and Colchester—the chain comprising Mark's Hall (a covert of perhaps a thousand acres belonging to Mrs. Honeywood and Mr. Hanbury, both good friends to the sport) and Chalkney (another well-preserved wood of about half the size, and belonging to Mr. Cawardine). Chappel is the ordinary meet for Chalkney Wood; and these are the only very extensive woodlands in the East Essex territory. To the westward a frequent meet is Shalford, the residence of Mr. Marriott, whose father was for five and twenty years Master of this Country, and where there is also a good covert. Finchingfield Park is in the same direction; and, moving southward, Bushey Common, two miles from the town of Braintree, is for Hazleton, one of the best coverts in the Hunt. Terling is for the Terling coverts (Lord Kayleigh's) and Duke's Wood.

In the south, or rather south-east, of the country, are Sir Charles Du Cane's coverts at Braxted Park—the only hilly ground in the Hunt; and beyond these are Mr. Barrett's coverts at Langford. Both these places have of late proved themselves highly for foxes and for sport. From the latter coverts two famous runs came off in one day last season, viz., a seven and a ten mile point—each with a kill at the end on the banks of the Blackwater.

THE BRAMHAM MOOR.*

VERY prominent among the Yorkshire packs is that of the Bramham Moor, which, having been formed nearly a century ago by the grandfather of the present Master, has been in the possession of Mr. Lane Fox for the last thirty-three years. For a short time it passed out of the family into the hands of the then Lord Harewood, to be given back in 1848 to the late Mr. Lane Fox—who died a few months afterwards, leaving it to his son. We have no hesitation in saying that the Bramham Moor Pack has few superiors among the leading kennels of England. Here is the result, not only of a lifetime but of the lifetime of one of the most consummate judges of a foxhound in England, based upon the inherited possession of strains of blood from the best and oldest sources. For racing quality and sturdy strength—for clean light symmetry and thorough working points—the pack at Bramham stands out a living testimony to the management that has created it, and a study and delight to the novice who would learn how foxhounds should be built. Perhaps some

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 5. Also Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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of the most successful blood in the Kennel was an infusion thrown into it some two-and-thirty years ago, from the original stock of old John Warde's pack—Mr. Lane Fox having purchased a lot of five couple at Mr. Wyndham's sale at Tattersall's. This had been lying for some generations in Hampshire, when Mr. Lane Fox chanced upon the opportunity of buying five couple of the strain, which eventually was found to blend admirably with the Belvoir, Brocklesby, and other choice blood.

The Kennels in Bramham Park are the only part of the ancestral establishment now occupied—the beautiful old Hall having been destroyed by fire fifty-four years ago and now standing, a magnificent ruin, in the midst of all the same picturesque and carefully tended surroundings that then made it one of the ornaments of the neighbourhood. The walls, columns, and perfect proportions of the old mansion still remain uninjured; the avenues and gardens are as beautifully kept, and the park, as trim and well-timbered as ever. The stables are full of horses; and the Kennels hold by no means the least-valued heir-looms of the House. But the wind wanders where it will among the roofless and windowless walls; and a spreading tree has reared itself over the very doorstep.

The Bramham Moor Country is situated just to the west of the city of York—starting from within four or five miles of which, it runs westward between the York-and-Ainsty and the Badsworth as far towards Lancashire as moorland and collieries will permit. It finds natural boundaries to divide it on north and south and east from the other two packs named; but

to the west and south-west it is only limited by the impracticable nature of the ground and the inimical conditions of its industries. In fact, Mr. Stanford's colouring brush flashed far over the line when it flung itself beyond Knaresborough Forest and on to the wild western hills. Bradford and Leeds again in the south-west offer a background of railways and manufactories that are altogether impervious to the foxhound. The river Nidd is the northern boundary of the country; the Aire forms the southern; and the Ouse marks part of the western.

Not a good scenting country is the Bramham Moor—the soil through the greater part of its extent being a thin covering over limestone. Nor can its foxes, where most plentiful, lay claim to straight necks or stout courage—a deficiency due, no doubt, to the number and propinquity of the coverts. These are the drawbacks to be laid at the door of the Bramham Moor; and applicable in the main to all the heart of the Country. To counterbalance them the Hunt can plume itself on a pack of hounds that will work a fox to death under all difficulties; and, further, can congratulate itself that, through the greater part of the Country there is an abundance rather than a dearth of foxes.

The best scenting ground in the Hunt (bar the rough western moorland, on which hounds never find themselves unless carried there by a travelling fox) is the north-eastern corner, which embraces a slip of the Ainsty Liberty—a name that may be briefly explained as applying to a bit of Yorkshire that belongs to one Riding and votes with another, that gives a title to

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the York and Ainsty Hunt and lies partly in the Bramham Moor. Here the soil is deep, the coverts are small and the ditches are big. Most of the Bramham Moor Country is easy to get over and about—the fences being low simple hedges with an ordinary ditch, the ground not too deep, and the woods soundly-rided. Indeed, when a large field is out (*i.e.*, a large field for Yorkshire—seldom more than seventy or eighty souls) the facility which the country offers for everyone keeping with hounds is in itself apt to create a difficulty for a huntsman, anxious to keep his hounds' noses down. The woods in the centre of the country, such as those of Harewood Park and about Bramham, are very extensive, but at the same time neither deep nor difficult. In the Ainsty corner, however, a very good horse is wanted; for, besides his having to gallop on through strong clay, the fence at the end of the field will often demand a tremendous effort—without any of the advantage of a rush at it over clean ground. The hedges are seldom bound and laid in the strong artistic fashion that in the shires tends doubly to advance the study of anatomy—finding practice, on the one hand, for the country bonesetter, and, on the other, drawing the attention of the novice to the all-necessary subject of shoulders. But they are strong-grown and closely trimmed, and of a height that often just conceals a yawner till your horse's spring is all but defined. You perhaps perceive the gulf before he does; but this makes the situation none the pleasanter, for it is too late to urge him without throwing him out of his stride, and the tension of

nerve is only prolonged. Hock and quarters, back and ribs, are the cardinal points of a hunter for this region—if he is to keep his rider with hounds, and himself on his legs. If he can add pace and shoulders to these other qualifications—then he is fit to go anywhere in the world. The Bramham Moor is not a great horse-breeding district—though its neighbour the Holderness at one time had a great reputation on that score. The farmers do not lend their attention to breeding a high class of horse for sale; while those who hunt (and their number is but limited) have more often aimed at being comfortably carried about their farms than at earning the distinction of being well mounted at the covert side. The largest fields are naturally found at the fixtures nearest the towns—Harrogate and York to wit. Leeds is a manufacturing rather than a sporting place; but Harrogate not only finds a strong contingent of its own, but brings in a gathering, by road and rail from over the border. York, too, is always full of hunting men; and has ever been popular with all soldiers of becoming proclivities.

The west of the country, as already mentioned, gradually merges into moorland and stonewalls: with a great scent on the open hills whenever hounds are tempted there. As a matter of fact, they do not profess to go beyond a line drawn from about Darley in the north to Burley in the south (from Burley to Leeds again, being scarcely within the pale of fox-hunting). Yet, as a sample of what may occasionally happen, the outline of a great and enjoyable run of last season (1880-81) is worth following on the map.

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By good luck their fox took them along the narrow valley of the river Wharfe, and kept them on smooth meadows for miles, when a quarter of a mile on either side would have put them on rough, almost impracticable ground. Finding at Almscliffe Winn (winn, be it remembered, being synonymous with the southern term gorse), they ran from out of their home country right on to the Moors. Passing Stainburn, Leathley, Farney Hall, Weston, and Denton Park, they killed their fox beyond Bow Wood Gill, near Middleton Lodge, after a run of an hour and twenty-five minutes and a point of nine and a half miles. The shepherds in this wild region ran down delighted to greet the unaccustomed sight of a pack of hounds in cry. They had been taught to consider the fox their common enemy, to be smoked out, or worried with terriers, whenever he was to be found; and this run was after a well-known old fox that had escaped them when they slaughtered his mate and cubs.

Another very long run of the same season (10½-mile point) began not far from the same source. On this occasion they found at the Cocked Hat Winn, at Spofforth Hags, left Spacey House Winn on the left, past Beckwithshaw, through Haverah Park and Hampsthwaite to Swarcliffe Hall, where they lost their fox in a strange country—and it is surmised he found refuge in the Craggs.

The hunting days of the Bramham Moor are Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. The river Wharfe runs across the middle of the country; and we can make use of it in pointing out approximately how the days are apportioned.

Monday is spent on the north of the Wharfe, or in the Harrogate district, and is, perhaps, looked upon as their best day—as the country is open, gently undulating, and with a fair admixture of grass amid the plough. And Monday, is, as already said, a popular day both with the Hunt and the outside public. Harewood Bridge is the great meet, and is the residence of Lord Harewood. From it are drawn his Swindon Woods, which are situated in the cream of the district. Kirkby Overblow and Stockeld Park (Mr. Middleton's) are other favourite fixtures.

Wednesday is employed on the south of the Wharfe, in the neighbourhood of Abberford and Bramham; where are big woods, a limestone soil, all plough in the open, an indifferent scent and plenty of foxes. The chief woodlands in the chain of those of Bramham, the woods of Parlington and Ringe (belonging to the Gascoigne Estate), Ledsham or the Boot-and-Shoe Plantations, the coverts of Ledstone Hall (Mr. Wheeler's), Micklefield Woods (the property of Mr. Bland of Kippax Park), Becca, and Hazle Wood, the property of the Vavasours of Hazlewood Castle—the last-named family and that of the Gascoignes being among the oldest and most historical in the county of York. The Cross Roads, Bramham Moor, Hook Moor, and the Boot-and-Shoe are among the most common meets on a Wednesday for the woods. Working on to Sherburn and Ferry Bridge we get into a more open and better scenting country; but, though nice level ground and good coverts extend eastward into the corner formed by the junction of

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the Ouse and the Aire, there has not been any notable sport in this direction of late years.

Friday is, again, north of the Wharfe; is devoted to the north-east or Ainsty corner; and includes all the meets nearest to York. Beginning with a strong flat plough country by Thorpe Arch, Catterton, &c., and working round to Tockwith and Cowthorpe, we find ourselves in a mixed grass and plough district—the whole being stoutly fenced. Thorpe Arch, Bickerton Bar, Marston, and Whighill Village are some of the leading meets; and there are many capital coverts such as Hutton Thorns, Marston Winn, Wilstrip Wood, the Copmanthorpe Woods, and Ingmanthorpe Woods (the property of Mr. A. Montagu of Ingmanthorpe Hall). For this part of the country especially is a stout well bred horse a *sine quâ non*.

Saturday is on the Bardsey side of the Kennels, and is the second day given to the South of the Wharfe. Here we get to smaller coverts than about Bramham; but the scent improves but little, and the plough is still the reigning deity. About Bardsey itself, and Scarcroft, is the best of this district—being a pleasant open and undulating ground. The chief meets are Bardsey, Wike, Collingham Bar, and Wetherby Grange (Col. Gunter's place). Bramhope and Addle are about the westernmost fixtures; and, indeed, it is not often that hounds are advertised as wide as these. They draw as near to Leeds as Temple Newsam (Mrs. Meynell Ingram's); but immediately west of Leeds coal and iron have the country entirely to themselves.

For a visitor to see the pack at work, York is the point for which to take train. The journey from

London is a long one as a matter of distance rather than of time. Five hours from King's Cross will set you down there—with every day in the week mapped out for you. The Bramham Moor, the York and Ainsty, the Holderness and Lord Middleton's, hunt almost up to the City Walls. Yorkshire is an immense county, and is hunted religiously and thoroughly. But a month's sojourn in its capital will introduce you to most of its sport, if you ride to all meets within distance, and train once or twice a week.

THE EAST SUSSEX.*

SUSSEX is a county whose claims for description might, at least in the East, better be based on its summer than its winter charms; for it may well share with its sister county Kent the appellation of the Garden of England, and the very qualities which call forth the term are in themselves rather against than in favour of Foxhunting. East Sussex is very freely, in parts almost continuously, wooded. Apart from the woodlands, its rich deep soil, its strong and carefully-kept fences, its well dug hopgardens—all tend to beautify the country, but make it a difficult scene for the chase of the fox. It is hilly too; though not to a degree that interferes very much with riding. In summer one is led to exclaim rapturously of its beautiful wooded hills, of its fertile and picturesque valleys. In winter one must own with a groan that fertility has changed its name to deep clay, and that sylvan beauty is now better known as sticky woodland. But, for all that, fox-hunting is carried on, well managed and well supported. The land and covert owners take care of the

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheets 22 and 23, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

foxes ; county-people and farmers join the sport in considerable numbers ; and visitors to Hastings or St. Leonard's have it in their power to combine with the advantages of sea air the priceless benefits to be derived from exercise with hounds.

We compared Sussex to Kent a moment ago—but it was, mind, from a vernal not a venatic point of view ; for, in comparing the country of the East Sussex with that of its neighbours the East Kent and the Tickham, we find the most widely different characteristics. In the two latter you may often ride a bee line for miles without encountering any necessity or even opportunity for jumping a single fence—and you are going, the while, on the top of the ground. In the East Sussex, on the contrary, you are in deep ground whether in covert or out ; and, in the latter case, can only make progress through the medium of continual jumping. Many of the fences are almost too strong to be attempted ; and recourse must be had to the “ rackways ” leading from field to field. If time does not admit of the less ambitious but safer plan of jumping off to pull the draw-rails down, they are generally to be jumped—and constant practice has made the men of East Sussex so familiar with them, that they hold them altogether in contempt, and, like Mr. Pigg, seldom stoop to getting off. Thus a man educated here, and seen with hounds elsewhere, is likely to be found steering for timber involuntarily—while others, brought up on the spot, are rather diverging from it. Where timber can—and must—be taken slowly, it *may* be (though the argument has at least two sides to it, and we pretend to lay down no

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absolute dogma on the point), as Assheton Smith ever declared it, the safest fence possible. Even then it requires the provisos of good shoulders and a horse not blown. But in a country where strong split rails have generally to be galloped at, the unlucky incident of a fling on to firm turf must be the occasional result—leading to a total change of opinion as to the desirability of timber over any other kind of fence, Let this be as it may, they like timber in Sussex; they are obliged to jump it and most other obstacles at a slow pace—often at a walk or stand—and they must have a horse that can do it. Speed is, to say the least, a secondary consideration in a Sussex horse. Stamina and jumping power he must have—or else he must move over the border to the Downs. Only a hedge and ditch, is the description of a good East Sussex fence—but the word *only* must be as elastic as in the case of “only a face at the window.” The ditch may have as wide a stretch as the qualifying adverb, and the hedge grows trimly and stoutly out of a rich soil—while the two together occur in deep ground and can only be approached delicately. Thus a horse must get as close to them as possible; and if he pauses when there, has a good look, and then heaves himself as far as he can—he may be the horse for East Sussex. He may, again, take a great many jumps in other fashion; but, if less flippant and airy, this is the safest and least fatiguing method—and answers best in the long run.

The East Sussex Country stretches along the sea-coast—eastward of the Southdown, which was originally included in the former Hunt—from about East-

bourne to Rye. Hastings is the most notable point in its extent; and forms the source of the largest fields, on the occasion of hounds meeting in its neighbourhood. Hastings is about two hours from London (Charing Cross or Victoria); and if your doctor or other motive agent, recommends Hastings or St. Leonard's as your winter resort, you are within reach of a good pack of hounds twice a week. These towns command all Mr. Frewen's meets; and if you do not care about bringing down horses of your own, you can hire something fit to carry you on the spot. Fox-hunting comes to an end at Rye, where the "Royal Military Canal" divides or marks the edge of the Romney Marsh—a broad area of flat grass, rendered impassable by dykes wide and unfathomable, which drain the land and divide the fields. Nor, again, is there any pack north of the river Rother, which forms the practical boundary of the East Sussex. *Why* such a stretch of ground should exist between the East Sussex and the Tickham, its residents alone could explain; for to all appearance this slip of country is, as regards coverts and practibility, quite as eligible for sport as either further north or south. The hills are very little steeper to climb; there is as much open space; and foxes are said to exist in improvable numbers. In East Sussex, with an established pack, there is no difficulty about foxes. About five-and-twenty litters is the usual annual return; which is certainly above the average in a two-days-a-week country. Among such large and frequent coverts foxes are difficult to kill; and it is not ground that often admits of bursting them up at starting. But for

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all that it is more than a fair scenting country. Scent seldom brilliant, is yet generally holding; and a fox may be hunted longer after he has gone than in most countries.

The Kennels are at Northiam, close to the residence of the Master—Mr. E. Frewen—who has kept hounds there for the last ten years, and whose first efforts in direction of sport in his country were in the shape of a pack of staghounds (once a week). With these he had runs of immense length; but his predilections for the more legitimate sport soon reasserted themselves, and the present pack was developed from blood of Mr. Musters', the Fitzwilliam, Southdown, &c. Hunting twice a week, he suits his meets entirely to the requirements of the country; and, the Kennels being quite on the outside, the distances to covert and home are frequently very long. Home, in fact, is left out of the question, both as regards distance of fixture and direction of drawing. Near Hastings there exists a configuration of ground that demands frequent attention, and the most difficult labour—to wit, the undercliff at Fairlight. The almost perpendicular side of the cliff is hidden with covert, and is full of holes and crannies. Foxes swarm here; and it is almost impossible to kill them. Hounds can barely scramble about, and their only chance of getting together is when Reynard runs the sea beach for awhile. Of course as soon as he is blown, or tired of the fun on the shingle, he betakes himself again to the cliffside for refuge, and has all the best of it with his less agile persecutors. A boat on the water below is the easiest and surest way of watching events; but for

huntsman (who, by the way, is the Master) and staff, there is nothing for it but to tether horses and climb about the hillside on foot. Cliff-born foxes, found inland, naturally rush back at once to their native fastness; and were the huntsman ever so bent on slaughter, he would find spade and terrier only useless toys against such a stronghold.

Any attempt to enumerate by name the coverts of the East Sussex would be a work to puzzle the Ordnance Survey Department, and, even if achieved, would be useless to a visitor, and confusing to any but a second whip of many years' service in the country. Hop poles are grown and shooting-coverts maintained all over the country. The names of a few of the principal land-and-covert-owners—north, south, east, and west—will suffice in some degree to classify the resorts of the fox. Lord Ashburnham alone has some ten thousand acres of property very strongly wooded. The Master and Mr. Adamson own the principal woods in the north. In the south are Mr. Papillon at Crowhurst, and the Duke of Cleveland at Battle Abbey. In the East are Sir A. Ashburnham of Broomham, who is *con amore* the secretary of the Hunt, the Misses Brisco, of Coghurst, and Mr. Shadwell of Fairlight Hall. Westward are Lord Ashburnham, Mr. Curteis of Windmill Hill (a former Master), Sir. T. Brassey at Normanhurst, and Mr. C. A. Egerton at Mountfield (another previous Master).

The meets may be summarised in the same way. The best recognised ones in the north are Northiam, Broad Oak, Cripp's Corner, and Udimore. To the south are St. Leonard's Green, Bulverhythe, Westfield

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just north of Hastings, and one of the best-attended fixtures in the Hunt), Sedlecomb, and The Harrow. Westward are Battle, Normanhurst (Sir T. Brassey's), Gardner Street (Mr. Curteis') Lunsford Cross, and John's Cross. The Bexhill district, Westfield, and Guestling perhaps provide the best meets in the country.

THE ESSEX AND SUFFOLK.*

A FLAT, and mostly deep, country, amid the outpour of many rivers, the Essex and Suffolk occupies the eastern delta of the two counties just north of the Blackwater. The Orwell, the Stour, and the Colne all wind their way through it; and help, more or less, to influence soil and surroundings. Plough from end to end it is, in common with all this corner of England; and where it is stiffest and deepest, there is found the best scent and the best sport. Colchester, Ipswich, and Harwich are the chief places of note in its extent—the first-named being on its western side, the other two on its eastern edge. Colchester is the centre of its lightest and worst district, but has the advantage of commanding many of the meets of the East Essex. Ipswich and Harwich on the other hand have some of the best of the home Hunt close to their gates, but have no where else to look for fox hunting—Harwich being on a point running into the sea, while the ground east of Ipswich owns no pack of fox hounds. We mention these particulars for the possible use of such soldiers as

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 17, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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may receive their "Routes" for one of these three places; while, for the sake of an inquisitive visitor, it may be added that the journey down from London is to be accomplished in about an hour and twenty minutes to Colchester, and two hours to either of the other towns (Liverpool-street Station, Great Eastern Railway). Small fields are the order of the day with the Essex and Suffolk; though there are a good number of county residents within its limits, and the Service is generally to be found represented at all meets within riding distance of the garrisons. All told, however, sixty is more than the average number for a field here.

The river Stour almost exactly bisects the country, and, being the divisional line between the two counties, has Suffolk on its northern bank, Essex on the southern. One day a week is accordingly given to each, and a third day is frequently added where most suitable. The lower part of Suffolk, towards the mouths of the rivers, and the east of Essex are the deepest districts in the Hunt. The coverts of the country are all natural, and, with the exception of a few strong woodlands, are not very large. The country is, in fact, quite an open one; and, though there are plenty of coverts everywhere to hold foxes, they are not of a size or frequency to make the latter dwell long when found. And the supply of foxes is said to be better year by year.

The present Master, Mr. Thomas Nunn, is in his second term of Mastership—having now hunted the country altogether some eight seasons. His uncle

hunted it no less than fifty-two years; after which his father kept it for about ten seasons. The hounds were given to the country by Mr. Nunn when he resigned in 1870, and are kennelled at Stratford St. Mary, seven miles from Colchester. In the better part of the country, the scent is, as a rule, decidedly good; and it is only in the light soil of the west that hounds often have any difficulty in making their way.

As a country to ride over, the Essex and Suffolk is, of course, like its neighbours, very "ploughy." But there are no hills to distress horses or to give hounds the advantage. The fences are quite of the better Essex type—low hedges and broad ditches. Thus your view of hounds is seldom interrupted by ground or growth; and, if you are fairly mounted, you may ride as near the pack as your conscience, or the Master, will let you. The term "fairly mounted" is meant to apply to the requirements of the ground in question—and those requirements are substantial if not very ambitious. Short legs and strong ones, good heart and good wind, with a marked adaptability for a long day and a good supper afterwards, are by no means the least prominent requisites. Sufficient stride and jumping power to enable him to cover a wide ditch at short notice are all essential for a horse here; for the measurement of an Essex ditch is frequently only to be obtained at the last moment. And, though a horse is not every day called upon to overhurry himself, he always has a strong day's work to perform before he gets back to his stable. A weed will soon wear himself to a thread; and a rash

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horse is sure to find a ditch to hold him sooner or later.

The country is said to have become much more open of late years—there being nowadays considerably less covert, while the enclosures in many instances have been enlarged and the fences lowered.

The hunting-days of the Essex and Suffolk are Tuesday and Friday—Tuesday being for the Essex side, Friday for the Suffolk, with an occasional bye day. A brief sketch of principal meets and coverts may be made to include the few further necessary details.

Among the Tuesday fixtures, then, is Bentley Hall, which at one time was the first meet of the season. It is the seat of Mr. Woodgate, who has a famous covert in Bentley Hall Wood (a wood of about a hundred acres, in the centre of some of the best of the country). Weeley Street is for Weeley Hall Wood, another very favourite place for foxes, belonging to Mr. E. Weeley. Bradfield Street is an excellent meet, leading to Simpson's Decoy and King's Wood and the good coverts of Stour Wood (on the banks of the Stour) and Copperas. Thorpe Street is fixed to draw Thorpe Park and the Rows—the latter being little more than thick double-hedge-rows, where they often find and run to Bentley. By the way, as an instance of how foxes of the same year will often take exactly the same line, it may be noted that about twenty-five years ago these hounds in one season ran five foxes in succession from Bentley down to Thorpe and killed them all. Had their foxes escaped, the good point would naturally have been laid to the

credit of a single fox. This piece of country—from Stour Wood down to the Landmere—is quite the best of their Essex ground, being wide and open and carrying a capital scent. It rides decidedly deep hereabouts, but as we move towards Colchester riding improves and scent falls off. The Osyth district, in the extreme south-west, however should be noticed first. Hartley Wood is a very favourite covert here. It is now only about a hundred acres; but was at one time of much greater extent. St. Osyth Flag is the meet for the last-named covert and for the other Woods of the district, St. Osyth's Wood, Riddles, and Maldon Wood. Towards Colchester is Elmstead Market for Frating Hall Wood, Mill Grove, and Thorington Hall Wood (where Mr. W. S. Frost, who is another excellent supporter, invariably has a litter of foxes). Alresford Hall Covert is another good draw. Beyond this Ardleigh Crown is the meet for Langham, Lodge Woods, Bullock Wood, East Wood and High Woods. In the south-west is Berechurch Maypole for the Berechurch and Birch coverts; Golgrove for Golgrove Wood and the Hangings (a good wood well cared for by Mr. Moy). West Burgholt is for Burgholt Wood and Pittsburgh (lately bought by Mr. Errington, who gives it up entirely to the Master in the cause of foxes).

Turning to the Suffolk side we find Hadleigh Crown for Howe Wood (a good covert of Mr. C. Newman's), Groton Wood and Stack Wood—two coverts of nice size—Groton Wood very thick with brambles and undergrowth. Gifford Hall means Mark Wood and Mill Wood, whence they draw on to

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Polstead and the Tendring Hall Coverts (Sir C. Rowley's) Boxford Street is for the Osiers, Edwardstone Park and Bull's Cross Woods. Brent-Eleigh, on the edge of the country, points to Preston Grove (neutral with the Suffolk Hunt) and the Camps (belonging to Mr. Brown of Brent-Eleigh Hall—a staunch fox preserver). All the western portion of this Suffolk side is, it may be repeated, quite a light soil upon chalk. Hintlesham Park as a meet has the Hintlesham coverts. Bamford Angel is meant for Sir G. Broke Middleton's coverts, Bulleyne Wood, Bonny and Ditch Wood. Oulton Castle (said to be the best meet in the Hunt) leads to the draws of Middle Wood, Lucy, and Muckhanger. All this is an open sporting country. The Muckhanger foxes are remarkably strong; and often carry hounds into the heart of the Suffolk country. Coddensham, which is also for Sir Broke Middleton's coverts, is about the widest meet in this direction.

About Wattisham, again, the ground is lighter for a while. There would appear to be some confusion hereabouts in Stanford's Map: for the Suffolk Hounds meet at Needham Market—the Essex-and-Suffolk drawing up to Barking.

Wide on the west a strip on the edge of the country has yet to be mentioned. Assington Park Gate is advertised for the coverts of Assington and Wislington, Cornards, and Mr. Mumford's famous wood—light chalk hills on this side. Another meet that must not be omitted is Stratford Hills (where lives Mr. Josselyn, who, though not a hunting man himself, always has a litter of foxes)—whence are drawn The

Commons, Dodnash and the Tattingstone Coverts. It may be added that during the past two seasons the hounds have been much improved by drafts of eleven couple from the Cheshire and eleven and a half from the Milton.

THE YORK AND AINSTY.*

TWISTING its tortuous length among half a dozen other well-known Yorkshire Countries, the York and Ainsty has a straggling outline quite unlike that of any other country on the Foxhunting Atlas. It is this very sinuosity and eccentricity of shape that chiefly allows of its being a four-day-a-week country. Its actual acreage would scarcely entitle it to that allowance on its own ground. But, shaped as it is, it has, so to speak, only to arrange its meets, and its neighbours make up all deficiencies on the score of space. 'Tis only fair to add that the others fully return the compliment—the procedure being a mere matter of amicable necessity. Thus, the York and Ainsty Country, starting just north of the Badsworth, runs up between the Bramham Moor and the Holderness, is narrowed at York between the Bramham Moor and Lord Middleton's, throws a limb in between the Bramham Moor and the Bedale, and carries its head northward between the Bedale and Lord Middleton's till it reaches the Sinnington. York is its centre—if such a configuration can be said to have a centre.

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 5, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

York is the starting-point for the hounds, and the necessary base for any visitor. Many of the meets are so wide that they must be reached by rail; but hack or railway bring all the country within grasp from here. York has its many sporting cities and a regiment of cavalry: and from the two sources supplies a strong proportion of the field at all the nearer meets. With the army York has always been a very popular quarter, both on sporting and social grounds: and fond as soldiers are of a gallop—and indifferent as they often are to the merits of a plough country, especially in their youth—they ever speak reverently and respectfully of the sport they saw and the treatment they met with when quartered at York. For the traveller who would see something of the six Yorkshire packs above enumerated, the capital of the county is easy to reach; and presents every advantage that a hunting-man can desire. The York and Ainsty, Lord Middleton's and the Bramham Moor are easily within riding distance. So is some portion of the Holderness; while the Bedale, Sinnington, and Badsworth can each be reached by rail on their days, without breaking into either breakfast or dinner hour. London to York is a mere trifle of travel nowadays, being but a five hours' journey from London (Great Northern Railway, King's Cross Station). The Kennels are at Acomb, two miles out of York. The Pack belongs to the Hunt: and by dint of careful and clever management has been brought to a high degree of merit, in field and on flag. Capt. Slingsby, of Scriven Park, is now in his third year of Master-ship, having succeeded Col. Fairfax, who held office

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for six years, and in that time did wonders for the kennel. Previous to the latter, Mr. Lascelles was Master for one year, Sir George Wombwell for three, and Sir Charles Slingsby (whose mournful death still remains vividly in the mind of most hunting-men) for fifteen. Mr. Samuel Bateman, whose nine years of Mastership terminated nearly thirty years ago, and who is now in his seventieth year, is still an active and honoured member of the Hunt.

The Pack was founded some forty years ago; Sir Charles Slingsby filled it with the Grove, Brocklesby, and Lord Portsmouth's blood; and Col. Fairfax, who was one of the first to recognise the merits of the Belvoir Fallible, brought a large infusion of blood from that Kennel through the medium of breeding and drafts. The fact that the Hunt is able to send forty to fifty couple annually out to walk, is not only an immense advantage, but speaks volumes for the good feeling of the farmers.

The York and Ainsty country is a deep clay soil throughout, with scanty exception in the north (about Alne and upwards) and in the extreme west where fox hunting and railway communication find a terminus on hilly moorland. And it is only in this last wide corner that anything approaching a hill is to be found. Scarcely anywhere else till Knaresborough is reached is there even an undulation; while all round York is a dead flat. The whole of it, too, except this trifle of western moorland and a few riverside meadows, is under the plough. The fences are fair hedge-and-ditch, rendered difficult only by the stiff holding clay through which you

have to ride to get at them. They are simple enough when your horse is fresh; but they grow no smaller as a run goes on and his vigour begins to fail. As may be remarked of a dozen other plough countries of similar soil, the York and Ainsty holds the best scent when the ground is thoroughly wet and your horse is going nearly up to his hocks. *Then* it is a good scenting country; and *then* you want a strong and well-bred horse to carry you at all. At other times a working scent and easy going is as much as you can hope for, or expect—for the ground dries, and turns to crust, very quickly under influence of sun or wind. Again, as everywhere else, the running qualities of the foxes vary in proportion to the power of pushing them. On a day when hounds can really press them, they may go pretty straight—even in the Ainsty district, where the coverts are small and very close together. On other and weaker days there are certain parts of the country in which they will scarcely travel beyond the parish in which they were bred.

The only large woodlands of the Hunt are situated in the south and in the extreme north, besides one or two in the Knaresborough district. The first-named comprise Escrick Wood (of several hundred acres), Moreby, and Naburn. Those in the far north are Sessay Wood and Brafferton Spring: while on the Knaresborough side are Ribston, Goldsborough Wood, and Goldsborough Moor. These are all the large coverts of the hunt. The rest are small, and, in many cases, artificial (including some five or six winn coverts). Thus the opportunities of cubhunting are very limited.

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In former days the best sport was usually obtained in the country a little to the north of York: when, early and late in the season, travelling foxes would take hounds right up to the hills towards Easingwoud and Coxwoud. But this line has not been so frequent of late years. By the way, the Olstead corner in the far north should not have been included by Mr. Stanford in the map of the York and Ainsty. During Mr. Bateman's mastership he used to draw it by permission of Sir Tatton Sykes, in the same way that it is now hunted by the Sinnington on sufferance from Lord Middleton—of whose territory it is an integral part. Thirkleby (sixteen or seventeen miles from York) is now about the farthest meet of the York and Ainsty. To reach this and other distant meets north and west (and occasionally also south) the railway has to be made use of for horses, hounds, and men. In fact, there is probably no country in England where the railway is so constantly in requisition—a fact that alone points to much extra expense to be borne by Hunt and individuals.

All the "Liberty" of Ainsty is very enclosed ground: but the country opens out again a good deal as you move towards Tollerton and Easingwoud. Galtres Forest no longer exists, though at one time a "royal forest." Indeed, the Royal Hunting Box is still to be seen by the roadside between York and Sutton, though its estate is now only that of a lowly farmhouse. The Ainsty used to be held in vassalage under the Bramham Moor—the terms being that it should be hunted by the York and Ainsty so long as a pack exists under that title.

On the far west the moors begin somewhere about Cayton ; and run into the hilly distance far beyond Pateley Bridge, which is virtually the Land's End of the Hunt. Last season they ran several times from the lower ground right on to the moors with strong foxes worthy of the hills. From Scriven Park (the residence of the Master) there is always a chance of a good fox taking them up to the hills, though more often the Copgrove direction is chosen. This was the line on that fatal day in 1868, when four as fine riders and good sportsmen as ever took the field (Sir Chas. Slingsby, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Robinson, and Orvis) were laid side by side in their dripping scarlet, cold and stark, on a table in Newby Hall, and four dead horses were stretched on the bank of the Yore. They had come by Copgrove and the winn of Bishop Monkton—a line already run twice that season—before they struck the river opposite Mr. Clare Vyner's, and called his private ferry-boat into use to follow the pack.

The farmers of the Hunt are just as staunch and sport-loving as ever, though unable, under pressure of the times, to take the field as freely and as well-mounted as in years gone by. There are still a good many forthcoming from the Ainsty and the Easingwold district ; and, as times mend, no doubt they will muster as strongly, and ride as good cattle, as in the best of bygone days.

Inferior horses are out of place in Yorkshire. You may get along well enough on a moderate one ; but he is not in keeping with the tradition and teaching of the county. What has been already written under the head Bramham Moor will answer verbatim for the

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horse required with the York and Ainsty. It is quite a country where men ride—not for sensation jumping, but that they may be near hounds, and may do credit to themselves and their bringing-up. Near York, and especially on a Tuesday, the fields are large—for anywhere out of The Shires. At the northern meets the number may vary between forty at least and sixty at most.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday are the hunting days, divided generally as follows: Monday is held north of York way of Shipton and Skelton. The open country between the latter place and Sessay has not a game preserver—with the single exception of Hon. Payne Dawnay, of Benningborough Hall, who, though he never rides even a pony, looks after the interests of the Hunt throughout the district. His own coverts (Skelton Springs, Overton Wood and Cotehouse) are always full of foxes, Skelton being the usual meet for this neighbourhood. Blue Bridge is a roadside fixture for New Parks and Hawkhill; while Alve (to which the York men often go by rail) may be for Alve Winn and Aldwark Wood, or for the same coverts as Blue Bridge. Near York are the meets of Strensall and Wiggington, from which a run into Lord Middleton's country is a likely contingency, after drawing Strensall Common and Suet Carr (the latter also being a rough open common generally holding good foxes). Stillington is the nearest fixture to Easingwold—the chief covert being Stillington Wood, which leads on to Hawkhill.

Tuesday is always fixed in the Ainsty to suit the Bramham Moor, who in return give Friday on the

same side. Nearest to York is Dringhaws for Askham Bogs—a famous covert, in bog and rough ground overgrown with beech, and a sure find. From here they are likely to go by Askham Winn or to Colton Hagg, or run into the Bramham Moor territory. Streethouses, on the Tadcaster Road, is to draw Coltan Hagg. Red House (the property of Capt. Slingsby, and the old family residence, though at present let) is a very popular meet by the Ouse side. There is a large and capital covert not far from the House, besides some few small spinnies. At Nun-appleton are Sir Fred. Milner's good coverts, with Lord Wenlock's Stubb Wood, a capital draw, to follow.

Thursday is for the Knaresborough and Copgrove side. From Ribston are drawn the large woods of Ribston and Goldsborough (Mr. Dent's). At Scriven Park—Capt. Slingsby's—(to which, as with other far-western meets, hounds are more often taken by rail) are various woods and the "Nidd Banks" (good rough covert underbank). Copgrove has its coverts of moderate size and scattered, and was last season the fixture which led to long runs on to the Moors. Allerton Park (the seat of Lord Mowbray) and Kirby Hall (Sir H. Meysey-Thompson)—each have nice coverts. From Ripley Castle hounds probably draw Leonard's Winn and other small places; and the extreme meets in this westerly direction are Swarcliffe Hall and Burnt Gate.

Saturday is almost entirely a woodland day—for the big woods far north or due south. Thus, taking train to Pilmoor or other station handy, they got

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to Brafferton to draw the Spring Wood and Sessay Wood, with Pilmoor (a rough moor) close by. Sessay or Raskelf may also be named for the same draws; while, meeting at Thirkleby Park (Sir William Galway's) they are likely to get back to the large woods of Sessay and Brafferton.

The Southern meets on a Saturday are Naburn, Escrick Park (Lord Wenlock's), Moreby Hall (Mr. Preston's), Riccall, and Osgodby—all for the same chain of big woods (aforementioned) and Skipwith Common—a seven hundred acre waste, altogether uncultivated. An occasional meet on the confines of the Country, and close to the border of Lord Middleton's and the Holderness, is Melbourne Hall, where Mr. Christy has some nice coverts—after drawing which hounds must work back in the afternoon to the woodlands.

LORD FITZWILLIAM'S.*

It scarcely amounts to taking away the name of the Country in question to say that only an intense love of hounds, and the necessity to which he has been born of residing here, could possibly have induced Lord Fitzwilliam to have established a pack in such an uncongenial quarter. Sheffield, Rotherham, and their contiguous chain of factories and dwellings, with Parkgate, Swinton, and Mexboro', form an almost unbroken town across the country up to Doncaster—cutting in two the only really huntable portion of a territory that looks wide and extensive on the map. The south is nearly all collieries; and so is a large central strip from south to north. The west is high and broken moorland—whither hounds only get by accident, and where men soon lose themselves amid its gullies, walls, and unknown wilds. Wentworth (the seat of Lord Fitzwilliam) stands the centre of one little oasis, girt on every side by railways, rivers, canals, collieries, tramways, and factories. The only other piece of practicable ground for horse and hound is a strip, two to four miles broad, along the edge of the

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 9, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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Grove, and stretching, practically, from below Rotherham to Doncaster—and, on sufferance, still further along the southern bank of the Don. Lord Fitzwilliam's little country, in fact, is nothing more than a small outlying, and supposedly impossible, tract left unhunted between the Badsworth and the Grove. It was thus that Lord Fitzwilliam found it when he succeeded to the Wentworth Estates about a score of years ago; and here he at once proceeded to establish a pack, by drafts from the family kennels at Milton and from Capt. Percy Williams. So successfully did he make the best of a bad job, that, wherever his hounds are able to get about at all, there are sure to be foxes for them to hunt. Some very queer places do they find themselves in at times: but love of sport is the strongest instinct in every Yorkshireman's soul, and the hounds are everywhere appreciated—sometimes almost to persecution. To the few men residing in Sheffield and Rotherham who have been taught to hunt, the presence of such a pack is a blessing on a par with Nature's bounty in coal and iron—on which they thrive and amid which they follow the hounds. There are staunch and good sportsmen, too, come out of Sheffield—quite apart from the thousands who will travel half a dozen miles by rail, in order to join it on foot and holloa a fox at the most suburban meets—and still more apart from such an instance as went to typify prosperity some years ago, when two colliers bought a horse and hunting kit between them, and in turn worked them three days a week. Fifty or sixty horsemen are to be found at every meet; and tiny—even makeshift—as the country is, three days a week are

enacted with a well turned-out establishment, and a pack fit for the Shires. How the three days are made up is a marvel—scarcely to be explained. One day is home: the other two are border days—or, failing ground or foxes, have to be contrived somehow, and somewhere among the collieries—or the moors. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday are the days chosen.

The map should be before you if you would learn how little, and which part, of the country is available for foxhunting. You will see a large area credited to the Earl; but for all practical purposes you may run a pair of scissors up its centre—from Chesterfield by Sheffield up to Barnsley and the Badsworth, following a line of railway all the way. You will thus cut off the western moors and many of the chief nests of coalpits. The southernmost loop, too, between Chesterfield and Sheffield, can do little in the interest of foxhunting—collieries usurping the greater part of its extent, and leaving only room for a single meet, namely, Gleadless Tollbar, from whence they draw Mr. Bagshaw's woods at "The Oaks," where they generally find a wild moorland fox, but failing which they draw Hanging Lea, a large gorse covert about 18 acres, recently planted by Lord Fitzwilliam. Quite outside this district and on the edge of the moors is a meet at Norton, with two or three good woods of Mr. Cammell in the neighbourhood. Such an advertisement is invariably a signal for a popular holiday from Sheffield; and thousands who ought to be at work are footing it with hounds that day. The other loop (for the whole district is a patchwork of pieces enclosed by subdividing railways), having

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Wentworth as its centre, is, again, completely separated from the remaining useful strip along the east, by the narrow valley of the Don—having two lines of railways, a river, and an unbroken street or two, all along its border on that side. Indeed, a fox found near Wentworth, can only run a narrow circle, or dodge about from covert to covert till he is killed—for a double line of railway, a river, and a canal block him again round the north, and coal and iron-works entirely cut off his escape to the west. It is different with the eastern strip; for a fox can travel thence as far as he pleases into the Grove country. There are plenty of coverts to lead him thither, while, as already mentioned, the valley of the Don at his back altogether prevents him turning his head in the other direction. A little patch of grass, good enough for Leicestershire even, exists on the eastern border. A three-mile circle would perhaps contain it; but, as far as it goes, it offers a charming soupçon amid ruder fare. With this exception, all the open ground in Lord Fitzwilliam's country is ploughed—where cultivated at all. As a whole, it puts forward little pretensions to being an agricultural country. It has other, and more wealthy aspirations. Where cultivation comes in at all, it is generally done as if it were merely a temporary operation. The stiff clay is turned and tended to grow whatever it will; but the fences are more often built in the most heterogeneous and haphazard fashion—especially as we near the coalpits. Thorns, sticks—even wire and old chains—are thrust together to make some sort of barrier. Ditches are never dug; and an honest post-and-rail is rare. In

the most "truly rural" districts there are simple swish hedges, easy to get over or through—with neither bank nor ditch to render them terrible.

The Wentworth country is all strong and deep clay, The East is a lighter soil; and a trip into Grove territory probably puts you on a surface approaching to red sand till you reach the fen land beyond the borrowed ground below Doncaster. And the whole is flat, until the moorlands are touched on the west and south.

With a country so difficult and confined, Lord Fitzwilliam yet keeps about fifty couple of hounds in kennel, and, as already written, brings them out three days a week. Wentworth and the home-coverts supply one day; and the eastern border has to bear the brunt of the other two, aided by occasional trips among the collieries and on to the moorlands. There are plenty of nice coverts round Wentworth, and, needless to add, plenty of foxes; close by, too, is another part of the family property, viz., Hesley Park and Tankersley Old Hall—the latter having been, a hundred years ago, a very large Park, but now altogether cut up. From here they may occasionally run over the railway, beyond Westwood Station and in among the collieries; but this is neither very likely nor desirable.

Turning to the east of the country, we find Ulley Gorse, just south of Rotherham, and close to Treeton Wood, offering as good a chance of a run as anything in the Hunt. It belongs to Mr. F. Foljambe, and is, naturally, a safe find. Wickersley Gorse is another nice covert, and for this the meet is Wickersley Toll

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Bar. Ravenfield and Hooton-Roberts (which Lord Fitzwilliam retains in his own hands) have each a good gorse : and at Denaby (a name that is best known in connection with the great colliery, employing some 3000 miners) is a large oak-scrub wood, where several litters of foxes are always bred. Crook Hill House is another meet hereabouts : with Clifton (also remaining in Lord Fitzwilliam's hands) close by. Half way between Clifton and Wickersley lies Micklebring Gorse, which is held to be the crack covert of the Hunt—lying, as it does, in the middle of a beautiful little grass valley. Half a mile beyond Micklebring is Mr. Wood's Gorse ; and the same good sportsman who owns it also takes good care of Silverwood, the meet of both for which may be Ravenfield or Hooton-Roberts. Foxes from any of this cluster of coverts will most likely take their flight across the border for Lord Scarboro's place, Sandbeck Park. A couple of miles south of Doncaster is Edlington Wood—a capital covert of some 600 or 700 acres, the property partly of Lord Fitzwilliam and partly of Mr. Foljambe, a joint ownership that speaks for itself as far as foxes are concerned. The meet for the last-named covert is sometimes Edlington Village, sometimes Warmsworth. Its rides are wide and well turfed ; and the favour it finds with foxes not unnaturally extends to the field. A single day might suffice to run through the little string of coverts just enumerated. But, as each is likely to show a litter or two every year, and there is plenty of space outside and over the border, they stand a great deal of work before the supply runs short. St. Catherine's Well

lies just on the edge of the recognised country; and here a fox is often to be found among the lowlying "carrs" (fenland), with the choice before him of turning back to Edlington or of going for Rossington—in the latter case having a clear course before him, with the exception of one small canal to swim.

Beyond Doncaster Lord Fitzwilliam sometimes goes by permission into the extreme north of the Grove dominion—for instance, to Cantley and Armthorpe (Lord Auckland's) and Barney Dun. There are few, if any, strong coverts in this direction—but much rough ground which may tempt a fox. When found, he is nearly sure to leave sand and shingles behind and make his way as quick as he can to Hatfield Chase, a low heather-covered moor which can neither be drained, cultivated, nor ridden over, and where chances are strongly in favour of the pack being lost possibly for the night.

THE CRAWLEY AND HORSHAM.*

Down, weald, and forest are the three varieties of ground which compose the present Crawley and Horsham country. In running down to the sea, side by side with the Southdown (and between it and Lord Leconfield's), it cuts into both the range of down on the coast and the lower weald inland, which stretch across all three Hunts. North of the weald again is an undulating and strongly-wooded district, still denominated "the Forest;" and thus the country is made up of three very distinct sections.

The geographical outline of the Hunt has been so materially altered since the maps referred to in the footnote were compiled, that they give little or no idea of its present outline. The C. & H. (an abbreviation we must be allowed throughout this sketch) now goes right down to Arundel, Worthing, and the sea—by virtue of a gift of ground from Lord Leconfield. On the other hand, the Hunt has thrown aside all the western and cruder half of its old territory as coloured on the maps, and has assumed an equally compact

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 22, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

shape, with the advantage of now having its kennels almost exactly in the middle of the country.

The C. & H. is a country decidedly in favour with the Londoners: for, while it is well outside the realms of Cockneydom and shares none of the disadvantages under which so many suburban packs suffer, it is yet easy of access and is able to offer a great deal of genuine sport. It is a fair—if not a rapid—scenting country: is well off for foxes (at least in all its best districts); and owns a capital working pack. Since Col. Calvert took over the hounds—a dozen years ago—he has maintained the numbers (some fifty couple) almost entirely by means of Mr. Lane Fox's annual young draft from Bramham, with the result that the driving qualities and cleanness of shape for which that pack is now so famous are observable with the C. & H. Kennels and hounds are the property of the Hunt: and the Kennels, with proportionate stabling, are extremely neatly built, and well situated close to the station of West Grinstead. The 8 a.m. train from Victoria will land you at Horsham before ten o'clock, and in time for most meets; or you may use the train for points further south, such as Steyning or Arundel. It is on days when hounds are most accessible from the metropolis that the C. & H. fields are at their largest. Not that they are ever really big—one hundred being, perhaps, their outside complement. In countries such as Sussex visitors from a distance are never likely to assemble in sufficient numbers as to interfere with sport—or even to make it such a matter of difficulty as sometimes in the Shires. Moreover—whatever may be the case here—

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there are few subscription-packs to which the visitors do not readily contribute their full share ; and their presence, therefore, is more often a boon than a drawback. Besides, the fences of Sussex are seldom of a kind to suffer much injury under the passage of a field of horsemen. They are more often a ragged growth on a bank ; and are scarcely disturbed by a horse jumping on and off them, or picking his way over, one foot after another. Where all the country is under the plough, there is little need for strong fencing ; but wherever it is found necessary to strengthen the hedges, it is usually done by means of strong wattle. A flighty horse is out of place anywhere in Sussex. With the C. & H. if it is not always needful to look before you leap, it is certainly necessary to look while you are doing so : and there is no country where a horse learns more fully to take care of himself. If at all rash, he is sure to tumble about ; and as self-preservation is the first instinct of the noble animal, the chances are he soon steadies down and earns himself a character for cleverness. Besides being clever he must be stout ; for most of the C. & H. country (except the Downs) is a stiff deep clay, and the rides in the Forest are holding and tiring.

Roughly speaking, the Forest is situated to the north-east of the kennels (or chiefly to the east of Horsham), and is a tract of large disconnected woods, with a certain amount of open country in between them. Many of these woods have of late years been let to Londoners for shooting purposes : and so it often happens that master and keeper are alike

strangers to the country, and indifferent to any other interests but their own. The rides are very deep in places, but the woods are not, as a rule, difficult to get about. On a good scenting day, and with hounds close at him, a fox is very glad to leave the choking brushwood and run the rides—the prettiest phase of woodland hunting.

The weald, or vale, again, has coverts of a very manageable size, thickly grown, and with foxes plentiful. There is seldom a *burning* scent, but often a good one—especially when the ground is not too wet and cold (a postulate that would seem to apply to many stiff clay countries—the *vice versâ* to those on lighter soil). The foxes, too, are stout and tough, and seldom give up their lives easily. Those of the Forest are especially strong, and are remarkable for their dark colour—their brushes being often almost absolutely black.

The C. and H. now limits its operations on the Forest side to the line of the London and Brighton railway (which bisected the original country from Three Bridges to Keymer). Its weald, and afterwards the Down, now reaches from the Kennels along the railway from Horsham to Arundel and Littlehampton—the weald reaching about to Amberley and Steyning, the Down and “over-the-hill” to the sea. The Down is much like that of the Southdown.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday are the four days of hunting, and Col. Calvert often adds a bye day to these. Taking the Kennels as a centre Monday and Thursday are for the north and north-east (chiefly forest and woodland); while Tuesday

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and Saturday are for the open ground south and south-west.

Among the usual Monday meets are the following, all of which lead to large woods often almost touching each other (though a fox may sometimes be forced into the open country outside), viz., Holme Bush (Mr. Clifton Brown's), where a good fox is often to be started, Tilgate Lodge, Pound Hill, Fay Gate, Rusper, Sun Oak, Leonard Lee (where Mr. Egerton Hubbard, Secretary to the Hunt, resides—and always has sterling foxes), Nuthurst, Peas Cottage, The High Beeches. About Warnham and Rusper it is very hilly; and the "gills," or gullies, make it extremely difficult to be always with hounds. Some gorse coverts have lately been planted on these slopes.

Thursday, again, is usually spent rather farther south, and takes in the Bolney and Cuckfield district, undulating ground more akin to the weald, though the coverts are still very large. From Bolney they draw the woods of Pickwell: Colwood Park is for the well known, and favourite, Spronkett Woods (Mr. Smith's): Cowfold, or The Kennels, means the nice coverts of Moon Wood and Gervoise's Woods—all this part of the country, adjoining the Southdown, being by no means the worst of the Hunt. Nuthurst, which stands on a hill, has some large and tempting looking coverts: Southwater is for the Trellar's Woods, where strong wild foxes are always found: and Muntham is the property of a good old sportsman, Mr. Percy Godman, who invariably provides foxes of a similar stamp. Slinford is for Col. St. John's nice

woods, and the Five Oaks. And, though much to the north of the rest of the usual Thursday ground, the Master's place at Ockley is generally named on that day. There is some very useful open country about here, and, after drawing his own coverts, he is likely to name Hitchcock's and the Roman Woods for the afternoon.

Tuesday is taken for the south of the country—either on the downs, or just “under” or “over the hill.” Parham Park, where Mr Newton lives and has some nice coverts, comes under the denomination of under the hill—being close under the northern slopes. Applesham is a hill-meet, and leads to the gorses and similar down-country as already described under the head of The Southdown. Among the more notable of the gorse-coverts are Steepdown, Lancing Ring, and Stunkbottom—the latter being a gorse of considerable size. Steyning is another meet for the same district. Patching Pond is “over the hill” in what is more often known as “the Findon country” for a set of coverts, large woods, chiefly owned by Sir Henry Fletcher and the Duke of Norfolk. And Findon itself is advertised with the same view, having also the Clapham woods, from which a fox is likely enough to cross right over the downs to the coverts beyond. Worthing does much to swell the field when hounds are anywhere in this quarter.

Saturday is purely in the weald, or vale; where the coverts are comparatively small, the country open, foxes stout, the fences built stronger, and the soil a stiff clay. A south-west wind and not too much moisture—is the prayer of sportsmen here. Among

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the fixtures are—Dial Post, a very good meet for French Land Woods (Mr. John Goring's, who, though never riding, is a thorough friend to the Hunt): Horsebridge Common, with coverts round it, and a stout fox always at Cork Wood and Calcott Wood: Broomer's Corner, for Mr. Carew-Gibson's coverts: Coolham Green for Hose Wood: Ashington for Hookland Plantation, The Baldwins, or American Woods (capital draws, also belong to Mr. Goring): Wappingthorn Gate, generally for Sir C. Goring's coverts: and Jolesfield Common—a large open common, whence many a good run has started—with Hatrell Woods and Lock Woods, and again every chance of a run, to follow.

THE WEST KENT.*

A CONSIDERABLE similarity of country runs through the whole of Kent. Its distinguishing features may be more strongly developed in one locality than another; but in the main its leading points are the same throughout. More hill or less hill, more big woods or fewer, more wold or fewer valleys—it is only a question of degree. The East Kent and the Tickham have already been dealt with; and a sketch of the West Kent, to stand by itself, would necessarily contain a *réchauffé* of much that has been written about the other two. As a matter of comparison, the West Kent has, perhaps, more open country, less rough and flinty highland, more pronounced vale than, and not quite such immense woods as, the Tickham, which intervenes between, and graduates down to, the East Kent. But its hills are just the same chalk slopes, with flint-covered surface and unfenced tillage; its frequent woods are of the same hazel, beech and unthorned undergrowth, with narrow straggling rides. Hop gardens fill its rich and sheltered nooks; fruit is freely grown where the soil favours orchard or garden;

* Vide Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheets 22 and 23, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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and until lately grass was only to be seen along the base of its valleys. Now, however, a good deal has been laid down on the hills. A strong or constant scent is not its characteristic; and the number and propinquity of its coverts add greatly to the difficulty of handling foxes. In the cubhunting months, and in the early season, while the underwood retains its foliage, the number of masks brought back to kennel is very small, and the score for the year depends chiefly on honest success after Christmas. On the hills especially is it hard and trying work for hounds and huntsman; and only science and perseverance can ever lead to triumph.

The West Kent Country is situated as follows. It begins at the Thames on the north—going as near London as civilisation and bricks-and-mortar will allow, and following its course by Greenhithe, Gravesend, to the mouth of the river, to take in the promontory known as the Hundred of Hoo. Rochester and Maidstone are on its eastern boundary line, Sevenoaks on its western; while Tunbridge and Tunbridge Wells are within its confines on the south, and it can stretch as far beyond them as it chooses. The towns mentioned all respectively furnish their quota when hounds are near them; and a few Londoners come down occasionally. But, though a little more than an hour's journey from Victoria or Ludgate Hill will set horse and man down at any required station within the Hunt, the West Kent is not a country that attracts many visitors from the big city. The time-honoured grounds of the Old Surrey and Surrey Union still meet

with much more favour in the eyes of metropolitan foxhunters, who of necessity or inclination are prevented from going farther afield; and the West Kent field is chiefly local. Further, it is in a very great measure composed of farmers, who, as a body in the Hunt in question, are thoroughly fond of the fox and the fun he brings; and even on the Tunbridge side the numbers of all ranks seldom exceed fifty or sixty people.

The Hon. Ralph Nevill (Birling Manor, Maidstone) has been for nineteen years Master of the West Kent. For the first two years he shared the office with the late Mr. Wingfield Stratford; and for eight years previously he had kept a small private pack, hunting a part of the western woodlands of the Tickham, and a part of the West Kent Country near his own Kennels. The present West Kent pack is his property; and is kept up to its strength chiefly by means of the young drafts of the Quorn and other good packs. The same difficulty as to rearing and entering homebred puppies exists here as with two or three other packs in the south of England; and though walks can be found for thirty-five to forty couple of puppies every year, it has been necessary, through bad luck with distemper, to have recourse to drafts from other Kennels. But, fortunately, so many Hunts are nowadays able to find quarters for a number far beyond their own actual requirements, that young hounds of high class and breeding are always to be secured. In a "first draft," too, from a good Kennel, there are sure to be several undeveloped youngsters that, like the ugly duckling, eventually

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attain to a much higher standard of looks—while for work they may be no whit behind their more fancied brothers and sisters. A foxhound must be at least a fairly-shaped one for the county of Kent. He is of little use if his back and loins are not muscular enough to push him up hill with ease. If there is any lumber about his shoulders he can never come down the steep slopes at top speed; while if his feet are not compact and strong the flints will soon send him back to Kennel a cripple. Even a good-footed hound often finds it difficult to move at best pace over the roughest of the hills; and a whole pack will sometimes be held back from driving to the front with a good head—however strong the scent may be.

The requirements hold good for horse as for hound. Your horse for the West Kent need not be a very expensive mount; but he must be able to go up hill and down, and, further, if he has to take his turn wherever hounds may be advertised, he must be capable enough to jump some fair strong fences in the vales of Tunbridge and Ightham. A good deal of meadow and pasture is there met with; and the intervening fences, where wanting in natural strength, are built up with stout wattle, and well-ditched besides. On the hills you may often go all day without jumping at all; as a land-mark between neighbour and neighbour is held to be sufficient guard over the corn fields for all practical purposes. During recent depression much hill land has been thrown altogether out of cultivation, or at best allowed to drift into rough sheep-walk; and is now rapidly assimilating itself to down. An improved

scent and better going serve, though sadly, to illustrate the saying as to an ill wind and the good it blows.

The Kennels have until lately been at Wrotham Heath; but the present site is at Warren House, near Otford—in many respects a more suitable place, though at some distance from the Master, being no less than twelve miles from Birling Manor.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday have been the hunting days, but this season hounds are out five days a week and sometimes six, the Master's nephew, Lord George Nevill, hunting them when they go into the Eridge country, which is generally on a Wednesday. The meets are fixed as the requirements of the country demand—no particular rule being observed, beyond that two days are generally given to the hills and two to the vales, and that Monday is nearly always spent in the Penshurst-and-Tunbridge Vale, while on every third Saturday hounds are taken down to the Hundred of Hoo. This latter is a low-lying peninsula forming almost a little country of itself, between the Thames and the Medway and some fifteen miles in extent. There are few coverts in it; and foxes are generally found in the reed beds near the shore. A fox must swim to reach his kennel on some dry patch, hounds must swim to draw for him, and more than one member of the pack has in past years been lost in the effort. But there is a good covert here of Lord Darnley's, called Chat-tenden Roughs, always full of foxes. And there is a nice thick gorse at Norhead, which place is one of the two usual meets for the Hundred country—the other

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being Four Elms Hill. The hounds have to be sent on overnight; and have generally taken advantage of the hospitality of Mr. Hilton (Master of the Hoo Harriers) or Mr. Hulkes of Higham.

There is some pleasant undulating ground along the north of the country at the back of Gravesend; but you soon get on to the hills—while, again, all the north-west gradually merges into fruit gardens, altogether at variance with crosscountry foxhunting. Cobham Hall (Lord Darnley's) is a meet, though hounds seldom go there nowadays; and a fox has been known to run from there through the outskirts of Gravesend, to be killed on the Thames bank at Northfleet. Swanscombe Bottom (with some considerable coverts near) is, perhaps, the northernmost meet hereabouts; and Swanley Junction the widest on the north-west. On the East Hills foxes are stout and wild—not easy to kill, nor easy to keep above ground. One of their best friends is Sir William Hart-Dyke, of Lullingstone Castle, whose coverts are ever a sure find—as are those of Mr. Warings of Chelsfield (whose love for the good red rover is quite a hobby). Mr. John Russell's coverts at Horton, also, are notable as being never drawn blank. Farningham, Hartley, and Portobello are other frequent meets for these Hills.

To the south of them is a narrow vale running by Ightham to Sevenoaks; and near the latter are some large woodlands belonging to Lord Amhurst, another good supporter of the Hunt. Otford Gate, Ightham, Crown Point, Wrotham, Addington-Park and Birling Manor are all meets along the line of railway from Sevenoaks to Maidstone; and just across the valley

by which it runs, are the enormous Mereworth Woods, the property partly of Lord Falmouth and partly of Sir Francis Geary.

Over the hill, again, is the best of the country—viz., the stiff, heavy vale by Tunbridge, Penshurst, and Edenbridge. Double ditches, by the way, are not at all unfrequent obstacles here, and the stranger should be prepared accordingly. Lord Hardinge at South Park, Mr. Mead-Waldo, and Col. Streatfield, with the two Messrs. Field, are leaders among those who keep this part of the country supplied with foxes. Bow Beach, Penshurst, and South Park will frequently occur as meets with this ground in view.

As we get on to Tunbridge Wells and beyond, the country becomes again more undulating and hilly. Eridge Castle is one of the meets for the Eridge district. In conclusion, Mr. S. Umfreville of Ingress Abbey has hitherto acted as a deputy-master, to assist Mr. Nevill; and is now succeeded in that capacity by Lord George Nevill and Mr. L. Bligh, nephews of the masters.

SIR WATKIN WYNN'S.*

A VERY sporting and enjoyable country is that hunted by Sir Watkin from his beautiful seat at Wynnstay, Ruabon. From Chester in the north almost to Shrewsbury in the south, from Whitchurch in the east across to the Welsh Hills, comprises a territory in which Denbighshire, Cheshire, and Shropshire are all represented. And, though backed along its whole length by the rugged mountains of Wales, the bulk of its extent is a level plain, eminently suitable for foxhunting operations of the pleasantest kind. A light, and fairly easy, riding country, carrying a good scent, having a fine supply of foxes and a splendid pack to drive them—no wonder Sir Watkin's is a popular Hunt, or that men troop in over the borders whenever opportunity offers.

In describing the country the mountains may be left out of calculation altogether. Hounds never go there, unless carried up by some highland wanderer; and then they get on to wondrous rough ground, amid bogs and boulders, heather and moss, where they can run hard, but where no horseman can follow them—

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 8, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

unless he has happened to have been born on the mountain-side, and knows every sheepwalk and hillpath. It is said that one of Charles Payne's (the veteran huntsman) earliest experiences, in this direction when he first came to Denbighshire, was to find himself beyond the pale of English-speaking humanity. For a time his hounds were lost, so was his way and so was all power of inquiry (for as yet his tongue was guileless of Welsh liquid and double consonant). At length by a happy chance he hit upon a shepherd who had seen the world, and who could speak something of the barbarous language of the lowlands. Delighted at the lucky meeting, the lost huntsman eagerly inquired his whereabouts—only to learn that here was "The Land's End," the last English-named place in the mountains, and that all beyond was a black void of Welsh Highland, in which he might as well inquire after his hounds as search for them in the dark abyss of Styx.

But it is the plain below—the valley of the Dee, and the level sweep beyond—that constitute the pleasant hunting grounds of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, and for which he formed his pack some eight-and-thirty years ago. Some of it is under the plough; but a great deal is beautiful grass—and where the plough has been at work the soil is light and firm rather than heavy and deep. In fact, the Cheshire vale (up the Dee-side to Chester) is exactly of the same character as the Cheshire Country over the border, while the Shrewsbury (or Beschurch) and Whitchurch ground are altogether of Shropshire type—gently undulating grass and plough inter-

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mingled. Small enclosures (and so, of course, frequent fences) reign throughout. As with The Cheshire, you almost live in the air when hounds are running. There is nothing much to stop you, while, on the other hand, every inducement is held out to jump. There are few bridle roads, or lines of gates; though there are frequent lanes. But, when once in a lane, it is often difficult to see over the bank on either side, nor is it always easy to get out of it again. The fences, however, though varying in strength in proportion to the use required of them—for instance, whether on a grazing farm or among cornfields—are generally very practicable, even tempting. A top-binder is a thing unknown. Every hedge is trimmed on its own merits, without resort to the artifice of laying and building that creates such ramparts across the smooth pasturage of the Shires. Thus (except, perhaps, in the case of a stile in a corner) a horse is never turned over by the knees; the sudden puzzled "Where am I? What's happened? Where's my hat? Get your foot out of it, you brute! Not a bit, thanks, don't wait for me!" represent a sensation almost unknown in the counties of Chester and Salop; and, moral, a man ought to be able to go on riding there for ever. The worst that ever happens to him is to find himself bowled over, or into a ditch—though even this depends a good deal upon circumstances and constitution for its charm, a charm that is altogether wanting in the accident of the ditch being just big enough for you both, and you the undermost. Most of the fences are thorn growth upon a low bank, whereon there may, or may not, be room for hind legs

in passing—a point that a horse should soon learn to discover for himself, the more so that great pace is not essential, even if it be on occasion permissible in covering them. Given the ditch towards him, if he cannot bring you safely into the next field he has no business in a jumping country; for, if he springs at all, there is nothing to throw him back or turn him over. With the ditch beyond, and the hedge fairly trimmed, it is a thousand to one on safe landing. And in the whole country there are not a dozen instances of the trap—a ditch on both sides. The only difficulties that ever interfere with riding to hounds are the dingles, occurring chiefly in the home district, and caused, no doubt, by the watershed from the hilltops. These are rough and wooded gullies, forking it in all directions; and, while you are threading one arm, hounds may be doubling back up another, of which their fox has only too gladly availed himself. The greater part of the country, indeed, is good plain sailing—allowing you to take it at your leisure when the scent is cold, or to fly it when the pack settles to run. Should the latter be the order over the Cheshire Vale, you will need a horse that can hold his own anywhere; for you will be riding to a flying pack in good company; and he, and you, must be quick to turn, ready to resolve, and in every sense fit to go. As a rule, a very active, short-legged horse is the one for the country.

Ruabon, near which the kennels lie, is some five hours from London (Paddington or Euston Square)—too far for the excursionist fox hunter, but by no means a bad place for a man who would hunt four

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days a week with one pack. If variety is to be sought, Chester or Shrewsbury offers a better base, and Whitchurch better than either—the last named commanding almost all Sir Watkin Wynn's, the cream of the South Cheshire, and many meets of the North Staffordshire and North Shropshire.

Sir Watkin started his pack some forty years ago, by purchasing the hounds of Mr. Leche (who had been hunting the country) and those of Mr. Grout of Kilgraston, the Master of the Perthshire. In its earliest days the Kennel held several strains of good blood, *e.g.*, from the old Cheshire Kennel, the Duke of Buccleugh's, Lord Yarboro's, Fife, Pytchley, and Duke of Rutland's. Two years later (1845) Sir Watkin bought five couple at Mr. Foljambe's sale; and about twenty years ago his Kennel owned two hounds that have since made it famous—Painter (who goes back to the Belvoir Druid, and his dam to the Cheshire Bruiser), and Regent by the Fitzwilliam Regent. At the present time it would be difficult indeed to name a pack whose build is cleaner and whose legs and feet are a better model.

The present series of sketches is not intended to include notice of the existing huntsmen of Countries described: but, in connection with Sir Watkin's, it cannot be left unwritten that Charles Payne of Pytchley renown is in this year 1881 about to enter upon his fiftieth season of service with hounds,—to all appearance as fresh and vigorous as when all the world used to talk, and Mr. Whyte Melville used to write, of his brilliant achievements from Crick and

Misterton. Beginning in a minor capacity with the Quorn, in the days of Sir Harry Goodrick, and the kennels at Thrussington, he went at the end of five years to whip in to the Oakley and George Beers. Ten years later he came to the Pytchley; and, after nineteen years unexampled success with them, took service under Sir Watkin, and is now in his sixteenth year at Wynnstay, with all his old keenness and happiness in the sport as strongly marked as ever.

The coverts of the Hunt are nearly all small places—chiefly of natural growth. Beyond the Duke's Woods and their immediate neighbours there is scarcely a covert large enough to be of use in cub hunting, though all the country is well stocked with foxes.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday are the four usual hunting days; and in noting how they are distributed we can point out any peculiarities marking the different sides of the country.

Monday and Friday generally alternate with each other in being assigned to the home district or to the Shropshire—more often termed the Baschurch—side. The home district includes the roughest ground in the Hunt and the only strong woods. The latter are Brynypys, Duke's Woods (Lord Brownlow's), Penley Dingles (the property of the widow of a very fine sportsman, the late Rev. E. H. Dymock), and The Wyches, part of which belong to Mr. T. Drake, part to Mr. Godsal. They are all situated in a line, and are thoroughly cared for from end to end. Brynypys (Mr. Edmund Peel's, an excellent preserver) is the most common meet for these coverts. The Trotting

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Mare has a rough country round it, but stout straight foxes. Duke's Woods, by the way, are mainly long straggling covert and dingle, affording ample shelter for foxes, but such shelter as they cannot cling to long when pressed by hounds. Marchwill and Sutton Green are two other good places. Greddington is also in the home circle, and has some long plantations to draw. The only fixture on the Welsh side of the Welshpool and Chester Railway, now in vogue, is Brogyntyn (Lord Harlech's) just under the mountains. Till lately there was a strong covert at Pentrebychan (now grubbed up), from which foxes nearly always ran up the hills. The Shropshire or Baschurch side is nice ground, especially in a wet season—a good deal of plough about it, but a light soil, fences not difficult, and the coverts small woods and plantations. Near Oswestry, however (Oswestry to the Severn being held to constitute the Shropshire side), is a nice gorse known as Aston Gorse, belonging to Colonel Lloyd, who at one time was a hard rider in the Midlands. A new gorse was also planted two years ago at Little Ness by Mr. Darby. Baschurch Rednal, Woodhouse, Whittington Petton and Oteley are all well-known meets in this district.

Wednesday is more frequently for the Cheshire side, which is quite the best of the country. From Broughton to Eaton Hall is known as the Chester Vale; nearly all is beautiful turf; scent scarcely ever fails; and foxes are fully plentiful. The River Dee occasionally makes a difficulty; for, if a fox cross it and no bridge be handy, it is impossible for horsemen to follow; for the stream is wide and deep, and the

banks high and overhanging. The present Duke of Westminster nearly lost his life when, as Lord Grosvenor, he attempted, years ago, to swim it. Among the best meets for this districts are Broughton (where resides Mr. Howard, who has sons hunting though he no longer often joins the chase himself—and whose gorse has been the source of many a recent good run); Worthenbury (where is another good friend to the sport, the Rev. Theophilus Pulleston); Chorlton; Carden Park, with favourite little coverts of gorse and blackthorn; Macefen, with a good gorse (well preserved by the Hon. E. Kenyon, and whence there is almost invariably a run); Farndon; and, just beyond, Aldersey (the seat of Squire Aldersey), with the Aldersey Brook close, a continual source of merriment and misfortune. For the Broxton Hills, on the outside of the country, and joining the Cheshire Hills, the meet is Edge Green; and the Cheshire Hills are drawn neutrally with The Cheshire as far as what is known as The Gap.

Saturday is understood to be, as a rule, for the Whitchurch side—the east of the country—where the ground is more undulating, grass chiefly grown, and the sport generally good. Iscoed Park (the seat of Mr. Godsal, who is connected by marriage with the family of Sir Watkin) is a capital meet, with good coverts at hand and good foxes ensured. At Hinton is Mr. Ethelston-Peel, who, like his brother, is a thorough fox preserver. There are coverts round the House, besides Peel's Gorse—a certain find. Whitchurch is often fixed—sometimes with a view to Peel's Gorse, or, it may be, for Brown's Moss (a lake

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with gorse round its edges). Ash is a very popular meet, with excellent country all round, and Ash Wood and some new coverts right well looked after by Major Bulkeley who lives close by. New-Street-Lane Lodge is for Styche or Shavington, in the corner beyond Whitchurch. Styche itself is often advertised, for Styche Wood and Shavington Park (Lord Kilmorey's). Sandford is the residence of Mr. Sandford, a model for preservers. The reed beds, osiers, plantations, &c., never fail to be thickly tenanted. The meets of Ightfield and Cloverly may point either to Sandford or Cloverly.

Wednesday in the Cheshire Vale generally brings out the largest fields, made up from The Cheshire, Liverpool, Manchester, &c. But the Whitchurch side, too, often has a very full attendance.

THE HURSLEY.*

A ROUGH little country of wood and wold, but well preserved and well hunted, and where sport is worked out in spite of difficulties, is the Hursley, under the management of Col. Nicoll. Some thirty couple of hounds (chiefly of Lord Portsmouth's blood) are kennelled at Pitt Farm, close to Winchester; to hunt the down that stretches to Stockbridge, and the woodland that runs down to Southampton and adjoin the New Forest. The Kennels may be somewhat primitive; but they are eminently healthy and comfortable—being well thatched buildings, warm in winter, cool in summer, and with the bracing air of the downs ever playing on the hillside where the hounds are exercised.

The north of the Hursley country is akin to that of its neighbours, the Tedworth and the H.H.—mile upon mile of sweeping undulations—the thin soil that covers the chalk tilled everywhere for grain or green crop; sharp flints scattered broadcast over the surface; and never a fence to check horse or hound in his stride. Here and there the outline of the cornfields is

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 21, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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just marked out with what may once have been a hedge, but now is merely a thin broken line of thorn bushes: and a dogcart might be driven over the face of the country for miles, without an upset or even a damaged spring. On a real scenting day over such ground, a fox positively cannot live before hounds if they start on good terms with him. For there is none of the scrambling, tailing, and difficulty that must accrue to the best of packs when forcing its way through and over a stiffly enclosed country. Where fences are strongly built—too high to fly, and too thick to let hounds more than dribble through—not only the fox, but the field, have six to four the best of the game, especially if the enclosures are small and the fences, consequently, close together. In such a case, Reynard slips through his chosen smouse without check or hindrance, and gains many a length at each; while the more keen and eager the hounds, the more they tumble over and check one another—and the more chance they give a jumping field to cut off and interfere with them. Again, a beaten fox or a bad one, will assuredly dodge up a hedgerow—and does it, moreover, with the advantage that the pack behind him is having a tiring scrimmage of its own at every fence, that the quickest hound to extricate himself is blowing the others, and that the whole energies of the remainder are concentrated in the effort to squeeze past each other and overtake the leader. On the downs, on the contrary, Reynard gets no respite from the moment he starts. He is half killed before he thinks of turning, and then he has nowhere to turn. The worst thing that can

happen to him in any country is to be "bustled off his legs" in the first twenty minutes. Here he has no chance of dodging to recover his wind and distance. There is nothing to cover, prompt, or assist, his flank march. He can be seen for miles on the open hillside; and merely plays into the hands of his enemies by turning short. Meanwhile a racing pack has been stretching along in his wake—every hound going up to the front, and every hound in better training than the object of pursuit. Thus a quick pack need never ask for more than five-and-thirty minutes to twist up an old fox over the downs—be the downs Hursley, Hambledon, Tedworth, or Craven—given the two named conditions of a good start and a proper scent. True, all the needful conditions don't come every day. If they did, we should all turn out to overrun Hampshire—especially in the case of hot-headed old age, failing nerve, or a better term, matured judgment. We should buy a galloper, and fling field after field behind us as gaily as when in early life we sought distinction from Melton Spinney or Waterloo Gorse—and found it at the first unexpected oxer.

It is in wet weather that hounds can do most justice to themselves over the open down—or, more properly, wold—of the "top country," by which name that part of the Hursley above Winchester is generally known. The ground must be thoroughly damp to hold a scent to which they can race. To be ready for such occasions, hounds, and horses too, should be not only speedy, but fit. And, besides being built to skim over the ground, each must have feet calculated to withstand the flints, which crop up to the surface so

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lavishly that they are often raked into heaps to clear the ground for agriculture.

The coverts of this upper country are fewer, less extensive, and more concentrated than in the southern division. Especially round Crawley and the Winchester Racecourse (where they get by sufferance from the H.H.) have they had many merry gallops over miles of smooth and open hillsides.

The lower or "bottom country" is totally different and difficult. It gradually merges into a close mass of almost unbroken woodland. Round Baddesley is a small round vale, fenced with bank-and-ditch, and carrying, like much of the stiff clay of the lower country, a fair—often a good—scent. Elsewhere there occurs the occasional opportunity of crossing a few strong-banked enclosures: and then a short-legged clever horse is useful. But for the most part foxes will run the coverts; and horse and hound and man must be of the stuff that is willing to persevere, and stick to steady work. There are plenty of foxes, not only in the south but all over the country—the supply having increased largely in the last decade or so, forming thus a practical tribute to the success of Colonel Nicoll's twelve years of Mastership.

The days of hunting are Monday and Friday, with an occasion bye: and Monday is for the lower country, while Friday is reserved for the upper. Having commenced our notes by referring to the upper country, we may continue to give precedence to the Friday ground. The meets on that day command much the largest attendance—a fixture near Stockbridge or Ashley bringing considerable numbers over the border

from Lord Radnor's, the Tedworth, the Vine, and the H.H., till a field of a hundred and fifty is sometimes attained. Men will come from a long distance for a gallop over down (the term being in the south of England used synonymously with wold), when they will not go a yard out of their way for a day in the woods.

Some of the chief coverts in the "top country" are those of Winterdown, North Park, Dumper's Oak, Northwood, and Crab Wood; but with luck and a good fox you are soon out in the open from any of them. And some of the leading Friday meets are—Leckford Hut, from which they draw Leckford Plantations and Chilbolton Gorse, with open country all round and every chance of running back to Winterdown and the woods: Crawley Warren, whence, after drawing the warren, they probably fall back to the woodlands. Meeting at Winchester Racecourse, they have Cuckoo Bushes and Worthy Groves, afterwards Northwood, and the larger coverts again. From the Rack-and-Manger, too, they get to Munglees and Winterdown. Wyke Down is the meet for Crab Wood, a very thick and extensive covert near Winchester. Sombourn Park, and Farley Mount, are meets for the strong coverts of Sombourn Wood, Ashley Wood, and No Man's Land. On the western edge of the country is an excellent wood at Mitchelmarsh. It belongs to Hon. R. Dutton, is a certain find, and generally leads to a run through Parnholt. Lower Eldon is the usual meet for it.

Turning southward, to the "bottom country," which is taken on the Monday, we find some good scenting

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ground and the chance of a pleasant ride in the little vale about Baddesley, or, rather, between Chilworth Hill and Romsey, with strong woods in the immediate neighbourhood. Baddesley Wood is a boggy place; which you should know your way about, before venturing in without a pilot: and the fences outside are large rough banks, often thickly perforated with rabbit holes.

Chilworth stands on higher ground, with some little open table land in its neighbourhood. Lord's Wood, just beyond, lies in a very rough district with many awkward bogs.

The Chilworth property belongs entirely to Mrs. Fleming; who, like the rest of the covertowners hereabouts, preserves foxes staunchly and goes in but little for game. Nightingale Wood (Lord Mount-Temple's) is a very favourite wood of considerable size. As a matter of fact, the distance between Chilworth and Stoneham is almost continuous woodland. Stoneham Park contains some most useful ground for harbouring foxes—to wit, ferns, rocks, &c. It has, besides, a home covert—a sure find. One of the best runs the Country ever saw was from here. A strong woodland fox took them right up to the north of the country, and was killed at Littleton—a point of at least nine or ten miles, after a run of two hours and twenty-five minutes. Hursley Park is the residence of Sir William Heathcote, who is the largest landowner and one of the best supporters of the Hunt. There is some covert in the Park itself; and Hursley Common, a fine wood close to Cranbury Park, also belongs to Sir William. It contains a great deal of gorse and

fern ; and is more like an old forest, with its open glades and wild timber. From here we get into the great chain of woods across the country—Forty Acres, Trod's Copse, Ampfield Wood, &c. The last-named is looked upon as the chief covert in the Hunt, several litters being bred there annually.

Of the Monday meets there is Chilworth Clump Inn, for all the Chilworth district, Lord's Wood, &c. Standing on Chilworth Hill and looking round, the country below would seem to be one great tract of wood on every side. Toothill Brick-kiln or Lusborough Pond are fixed for Nightingale Wood and its neighbours. From the Hut-Inn, Chandler's Ford, the first draw is probably Stoneham ; and from Hursley Pond the Hursley Coverts. Standen Gate, near Otterburn Hill, is on the east of the country, adjoining the Hambledon.

Winchester and Southampton are, of course, the two chief quarters from which you may by chance have opportunity of seeing the Hursley. You are not likely to visit the Country from a distance ; though, should you be prompted to do so, Winchester is less than two hours from London (Waterloo) and Southampton than two and a half.

THE HAMBLETON.*

As well as being a much larger country than its next-door neighbour, The Hursley, The Hambledon is more regularly enclosed and fenced—though by no means in the sense of being cramped or confined. Its wold is fairly marked out in widespreading enclosures; its vales are apportioned off by bank-and-hedge-and-ditch into firm sound fields of grass and plough; its woodlands are very strong, but there is always open ground of vale or wold to be reached from them, and a day entirely in the woods is very exceptional indeed. Foxes are generally inclined to leave the great coverts; and seldom double about them after the cubhunting season.

The Hambledon Country is the extreme south-east of Hampshire—the Southampton Water dividing it from the New Forest, which takes up the other half of South Hants. Commencing on the north with wide sloping wolds such as go to make up the body of the H. H. country—it gradually merges into strong vale and a style of soil and culture more akin to Sussex and the country of Lord Leconfield, which adjoins it on the east.

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 21, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

Winchester is its extreme nor'-westerly point. From there it runs down to Southampton; and carries fox-hunting along the Southcoast, as near to Gosport and Portsmouth as the fortifications of Portsdown Hill will allow, till it reaches Havant—where Lord Leconfield takes up the thread, lending, however, to the Hambledon a strip of his territory between (approximately) Up Park and the village of Funtingdon. The Hambledon Country, indeed, is (with the exception of a small corner of Lord Leconfield's) the only source from which the soldiers and sailors of these garrison seaports can get their hunting—unless they take the train inland, or the ferry-boat across to the Isle of Wight. Some few of them adopt the sensible plan of keeping their horses at the pretty little town of Bishops Waltham, which besides being nearly in the centre of the country—and easily commanding all the best of it—is only a short distance from the Kennels. The last point is always a desideratum when you are hunting with a single pack. The day's proceedings and duration, the direction and order of the draws, must necessarily be arranged with the hounds as one of the leading considerations. If your starting-point is much the same as theirs you naturally share the benefit. But, besides this and besides the advantage of their company and guidance to covert and home if wanted—there is the opportunity for acquiring a vested interest in the doings of the pack that you will attain in no other way. You may learn to know individual hounds before you see them at work as a body; you can then note them in the field when no one is at your elbow who could help you with name or

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description ; and you can verify on the road home what you have seen during the day. There are few huntsmen but are glad of a sympathetic interest in their favourites ; and there are few who will not cheerfully assist it. We may not all be imbued with such an interest, or care to cultivate it. But there are many of us who do ; and to whom it represents a considerable part of the pleasure we derive from foxhunting. Masters of foxhounds and huntservants are naturally those who take the deepest interest in the subject of hounds. But there is no reason that it should be confined entirely to them—though it is undeniable that there are some very few of either class who not only deny the possibility of its existence elsewhere, but would prefer its remaining unrecognised and uncouraged except among themselves. So rare, however, are the instances of individual jealousy attempting to guard the study of hounds as if it were a branch of the Eleusinian mysteries, that they fortunately stand out only as exceptions to prove a strongly marked rule of unselfishness and good feeling.

It is, of course, with a field of moderate dimensions that most opportunity is given to the looker-on of seeing what hounds are doing, and how they do it. And the Hambledon field is at no time a large one—gauged by comparison with what is to be seen with many other packs at a distance from Hampshire.

The kennels are at Droxford, some three or four miles north of Bishops Waltham. Mr. Walter Long, who carries the horn himself, is the son of Mr. W. Jervis-Long, of Preshaw House, who hunted the country previously for twelve seasons. He has had

the country seven years, and has built his present pack almost entirely from the Cottessmore Kennel; and with it has been very successful both in killing foxes and showing sport. Preshaw, with its good coverts, lies so as to overlook the down, or wold, district — hill after hill succeeding each other in smooth strong dip and rise across the whole north to the country from Winchester by Hambledon to Idsworth. So much more severe are the Hambledon hills than the milder undulation of the H. H., that when hounds find a scent on which they can extend themselves it is very difficult to ride the line with them, and it is generally advisable to cling as much as possible to the upper ridges. On this light thin soil, though, scent is by no means an everyday commodity; and at all times it is necessary for hounds to be close at their fox if they are to press him. Beacon Hill and Old Winchester Hill are the two great landmarks of the north of the country: and the latter hill, with its background of covert, is regarded by most foxes found near it as a sort of city of refuge for which they should make at once.

The north-east or Petersfield corner comprises some pleasant vale of the Sussex type. Amid it the "Petersfield Hangers" form quite a feature—being hillside covert, so steep that not only would riding through be out of the question, but it is the practice of the wood-cutters to let the wood as they cut it find its way to the bottom by its own weight.

The Foxhunting Atlas shows most plainly the natural geographical types of the several parts of the country. From it will be readily seen that south of

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Hambleton and its hilly wold comes a great stretch of woodland, written down as the Forest of Bere, but now more generally known as "The Liberties"—and reaching almost from Bishop's Waltham to the eastern edge of the country. It is only, however, in the extreme east that the mass of wood is so great that there is anything to preclude the feasibility of driving a fox quickly into the open. Even there much of the timber has been swept away, and given place to agriculture. Once in the open a fox has the choice before him of turning up over the wold and making for Old Winchester Hill, or of running the nice vale which, nearly all grass about Southwick, continues with grass and plough intermixed for many miles along the railway to Bishopstoke. As the Atlas would convey, there is scarcely a break in the style of country, as you pass Wickham, Botley, take in Bishop's Waltham, and go on by Durley to Bishopstoke. The enclosures are small, the fences are hedges (mostly trimmed, never laid) on a bank with a ditch on one side and often on both; the soil is a stiff clay, and scent is generally fair, often good. The Southwick neighbourhood, indeed, is considered the cream of the country; and a find there seldom fails to lead to good results. Last season (1880-1881) the Hunt was treated to two of their best runs from Southwick.

It will be easily understood that for the Hambleton vale and woodland a clever horse, shortlegged and strong-backed, is required: while on the hills a turn of speed is desirable, or even essential.

The hunting days of the Hambleton are Monday,

Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, arranged much as follows :—

Monday is generally for the eastern hills and the woods of Idsworth and district, or, as it is more often termed, the Horndean side. Idsworth House is the seat of Sir C. Jervoise, the oldest subscriber, and, with his son Col. Jervoise, one of the staunchest supporters of the Hunt. He has many large woods with plenty of foxes in each. Besides Idsworth, Horndean is a frequent meet hereabouts—for Horndean Holt etc. Butser Hill and Highden Wood are also often advertised—the latter being a large covert, with hills and light ground close at hand. Barn Green, Waterloo Inn and Leigh Park (the seat of Sir F. Fitzwigram) are the chief meets for the old Forest. Occasionally Southwick Park may be fixed for a Monday—giving the vale country on that day. But more often Wednesday is the day for the Vale, and for such meets as Holywell House. Here they have a string of nice coverts (Queen's Liberty the largest) bordering the stream that runs from north to south of the country, and where foxes are always to be found. Nearer Fareham is a good and frequent fixture, Old Vine, with nice vale till Portsdown Hill—a kind of frowning seawall—is reached. From little Park (the property of a good sportsman, Mr. C. Radclyffe), you get into some woods of considerable extent, such as Hall Court and Fairthorns. Swanswick is an occasional meet beyond the railway towards Netley.

The alternate Friday is for the Preshaw side, and again for hills and strong woods. There are several of the latter on the Preshaw estate, with, of course,

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abundance of foxes. Corhampton House (Mr. King-Wyndham's) is at no great distance from Preshaw; and, like it, has good coverts and many foxes. Warnford Park points to Old Winchester Hill and neighbourhood—Warnford Osier Beds and small coverts along the bottom, whence a fox will generally cross over the hilltop.

The other Friday is employed on the strip of country lent by Lord Leconfield on the eastern border. To reach this, hounds have to be sent on overnight, generally to Idsworth House or Stanstead Park (Mr. G. Wilder's). In these weeks the Saturday meet is fixed in the Preshaw, or regular Friday, country.

Saturday may be for either of the two extreme northern corners of Petersfield or Winchester. In the former, Baising Park (Mr. Nicholson's) near Petersfield is situated in some pleasant vale country. West Meon Hut and Westbury House are both for the coverts of Mr. Lewis, an excellent fox preserver. Near Winchester, again, we get Longwood House (Lord Northesk's) where are goodly little coverts and open downs; while Morstead Village has small woodlands and a similar kind of open country near it.

LORD COVENTRY'S.*

THE Severnside, from Worcester to Tewkesbury for its length: its breadth from the Malvern Hills on the west, to the North Cotswold and The Warwickshire boundaries on the east—will convey in some degree the whereabouts and extent of the country hunted by Lord Coventry. The southern quarter of Worcestershire would make an equally good definition; and, as most counties have their special peculiarities affecting the fox hunting in their midst, perhaps the latter specification may be found the more explanatory. Worcestershire is in character, as it is in position, something between Warwickshire and Herefordshire. While it has the small enclosures of the latter, and many of its orchards, gardens, and paddocks, its fences are more of a mild Warwickshire type. That part of it hunted by Lord Coventry is—with the striking exception of the Malvern and Bredon Hill and the rugged north-eastern corner containing the Ridgeway—more open and level than the bulk of Herefordshire. The Malvern Hills run, a bold and abrupt range of some fifteen hundred feet in height,

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheets 14 and 15, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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and which foxes will very seldom face, down his western border and into the Ledbury Country. The Bredon Hill is an isolated eminence, more practicable for foxhounds in the extreme south-east; and, with these two landmarks in view from end to end of the country, a stranger should find it difficult to lose his way by daylight after his first week's experience. The Ridgeway is a rough hilly woodland overlooking the Avon and the narrow vale separating it from The Warwickshire Territory. What with the Severn and the Avon, Lord Coventry's country is singularly well dealt with in the matter of river-water and heavy vale—the two streams forming their junction at Tewkesbury after piercing the country, end to end, from two different directions. Thus in times of severe rain, such as in the years 1879-80, many miles of ground are under the flood, and remain deep and wet for months afterwards. A cold clay soil follows the course of the rivers, and is common to a great part of lower Worcestershire. A wet season accordingly places the lower ground at the worst advantage. To carry a scent it requires a dry and warm rather than a wet and chilly winter: while, to offer pleasant riding, the less water has been soaked into the soil the better. Much of the country, again, is a rich loam rather than a clay soil; and this, on the contrary, requires wet. Without it, the grass may carry a scent, but the plough will not. A great deal of grass is scattered over the country in small meadows, especially round and near the numerous villages. Agriculture, which would appear to be the staple industry of Worcestershire, is carried on chiefly on the principle of small

enclosures, and, when hounds are running in some parts of the country, you are no sooner into a field than you should be gathering your reins for a jump out again. A rash horse might even swing you out over a second fence before you had fairly collected him, and yourself, after landing over the first. Fortunately the fences themselves are not of a description that need make even such an accident appalling—unless it led to jumping into an apple-orchard. If they *were* strong and high, as well as close together, it would be often difficult to ride and difficult to see, when hounds are going fast. As it is, they are generally small flying hedges mended with timber, and often, though not always, guarded by a ditch. The hedge is seldom encouraged to grow to any appalling height, nor are the thorns stoutly bound and entwined. But timber is plentiful, the Worcestershire farmers leave no gap, and post-and-rails fill up every weak place. It is upon the size and strength of these, upon the deepness of the ground, and upon the presence and depth of an unforeseen ditch, that the variety and occasional difficulty of crossing the country depends. As a rule, to keep hounds in sight is well within the scope of a fair horseman and a strong useful horse—"useful," you will remember, being the complimentary epithet earned by Mr. Sawyer's horses when transplanted from the provinces to more fashionable Market Harboro'. Limited size of enclosures and frequency of the fences are, of course, all against hounds—and in favour of a fox, when he is tired, or by nature a short runner. Not only are hounds then constantly

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hindered by the fences ; but every inducement is held out to a fox to dodge when pressed, or to run his foil when going at his leisure well in front.

The country round Twining-Fleet, however, near Tewkesbury, in the extreme south, is of quite a different type—being a beautiful tract of rich grass land, fenced with strong oxers, and over which hounds always carry a head. But the coverts in this vale, being only small osierbeds, will not stand frequent visits, though foxes are well and carefully preserved.

Lord Coventry has excellent Kennels at his seat at Croome Court near Severn Stoke (and eight miles from Worcester) : and, as is to be expected from one whose judgment on the subject of hounds is so fully acknowledged and so freely sought, his pack is not only of high class and appearance, but of great merit in their work. He first took hounds in 1867 ; and began his pack with the purchase of several lots at the sale of the South Wilts and the Quorn, and from various other sources. Since then the friendship of the Duke of Rutland has given him constant access to the best Belvoir blood ; and he has also had the use of stud hounds from Brocklesby (among them Random and more lately Flamer). The greatest instance of his success was in “ Rambler,” the present patriarch of the pack, and who, though nine years old, is still quite able to take his part in killing a fox with the young ones. Lord Coventry’s Rambler is by Lord Fitzhardinge’s Collier, out of a bitch who combined the most favourite strains of Lord Henry Bentinck’s blood—and he is already the sire of more

than sixty couple of working hounds in different good Kennels.

In the far north are two good woods, Bow Wood and Grafton Wood, which have shown much sport of late years. These are neutral with The Worcestershire; that Hunt taking them one month, and Lord Coventry the next; and both are the property of his Lordship. Peopleton is a favourite meet which may lead to them or to the coverts of the Rev. James Cook and Mr. Acton. In the North of the country the enclosures (all deep plough) are found much larger, and ditches are almost invariably dug.

On the northeast or Ridgway district, the chief of the large woods are Weethley (neutral with The Warwickshire), Old Yewel and Salford Coppice. Very stout foxes are found in these coverts, and great sport has been had from them during the last three or four seasons—a point of eight or nine miles into the Worcestershire country having been by no means uncommon.

The coverts of the country are generally of a very manageable size; and are almost entirely natural plantation and wood—as opposed to gorse and other artificial covert. There are strong woods enough for all cubhunting and schooling purposes without the country being in any way blocked by woodland. Thus there is the chain of woods between Pershore and Croome, chiefly belonging to Lord Coventry; there is the wooded length of the Ridgeway, well typified by Rough Hill Wood at its far end; and there are the good scenting coverts on Bredon Hill. There is also good woodland at Old Hills across the Severn

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and at Suckley in the far North-west. The supply of foxes throughout the country is quite up to requirements.

The two rivers are of course apt to keep foxes found near them to particular lines, though occasionally a fox will set them at defiance, breast the water, and make a distant point. In the case of the Severn this may be awkward enough for the field; for with the exception of the two ferries, at Fixham and near the Rydd, there is no means of crossing between Worcester and Upton.

The hunting days are Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday; and the meets are arranged as the demands of the country may seem to suggest. Thursday, however, is more often the day on which hounds are out near the kennels, or Bredon Hill, for which the meet is probably Nafford Mill, Kemerton Quarries, or Elmley Village. Among their best meets hereabouts are Bockeridge Common, Severn End and Pirton Village. Bockeridge Common, being on the edge of the country nearest to Cheltenham, is also the most thickly attended. On the Malvern side are Bransford Station, Suckley, Powick, Newland and Old Hills. Lower down is The Rydd (the property of Sir E. Lechmere, a true fox-preserver), with nice coverts and a good country round. From the Cliffe, which is in the same property, they had the best run of last season—fifty minutes with a kill in the Team.

One point that should be noticed in connection with hounds for Worcestershire is the absolute necessity for their possessing pluck and hardihood to face the

blackthorn, which grows so freely in the coverts and punishes hounds very severely.

Worcester and its environs do most towards swelling Lord Coventry's field. Malvern is more of a summer resort than a hunting quarter. The little town of Pershore is not far from the centre of the Hunt and only four or five miles from the Kennels. Worcester is three hours from London (Paddington); and Pershore, being attainable only by a slower train, requires about another half hour. Worcester has The Worcestershire Kennels and country at hand: Pershore is within reach of The Warwickshire and The North Cotswold. Between Worcester and the Kennels at Croome, and along the north of the country, is pleasant open ground of mixed grass and plough; and the same continues down the east bank of the Severn to the junction of the rivers—improving after it passes the Kennels, till the Strensham district is looked upon as the best scenting ground in the Hunt. There is nice fair hunting country again between Worcester and Malvern about Bransford; and again farther south near The Rydd. But this side of the Severn is often very wet and deep. Bredon Hill is rather a favourite place in the interests of hounds; and its summit offers a scene quite different from the rest of the country. There you find yourself among heath and stonewalls; but it is capital scenting ground, and its foxes are very strong, often standing nearly two hours before hounds. From the top you look down upon the Avon half embracing the foot of the hill on the west; while northward lies a good vale, and a run from Cropthorne to Bredon

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Hill is an event of frequent occurrence—though it is difficult to induce a fox to take the converse direction and make a point from the hill across the vale. To the north-west of Pershore are several strong coverts, notably Tiddesley Wood (some 300 or 400 acres, and Lady Wood, a large wood belonging to Sir John Sebright; Croome Perry Wood the Broughton Woods and Deerfold Wood, belonging to Lord Coventry. Tiddesley Wood and Drake's Broughton are, perhaps, most frequently advertised, when this range of coverts is to be drawn.

THE GROVE.*

IF the Grove as a country does not typify all the rapid requirements of the modern school of fox-hunting, the Grove Hounds (Lord Galway's) have long held high rank, and been a source from which the pack of nearly every flying country has derived assistance. Lord Galway's pack, is, in fact, one of the oldest in the kingdom. On the late Mr. Foljambe first taking hounds, he purchased it from Lord Scarboro'—in the year 1825 or 1826. Lord Galway (father of the present) became Master in 1858, on the health of the present Lord Scarborough failing; and finally bought the hounds from Mr. Foljambe in 1866. He continued to hunt the country till his death in 1876, when his son the present Lord Galway took over the Mastership and the horn. The Grove Hounds are quite as celebrated for their working power as for their rich quality—and both virtues are carefully maintained as ever (a short note on their recent breeding will be found farther on).

But it is with a Country rather than its Hounds, the present series of sketches has to do—that the

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 9, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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in proportion to the degree of nastiness: and we try to prove it by asserting that his instinct will make him run a red herring, while education is necessary to make him run a fox. But the fact remains, that a good pronounced odour will drive a weaker one out of his nostrils, or at all events act detrimentally. In plain language, a single well-manured field is five minutes' law to a fox: and well-farmed arable is seldom long free from the tainting effects of savoury top dressing. The distinction of smell is altogether apart from the delicacy of nose which allows a hound to discriminate between fox and hare—as exemplified in a pack once owned by a still-living sportsman, which in the same season and in the same country, killed thirty-two foxes and seventy-five hares, never changing from one scent to the other when settled to a line.

These remarks, though, are applicable to plough countries generally—not to the Grove only or especially. It may or may not, be relevant, either, to assert that there are many more good packs of hounds in provincial countries than in the Shires—a fact easily to be understood when it is borne in mind how frequently Masterships are passed from hand to hand in the Midlands, and also how little the necessary virtues of a foxhound vary between one country and another. A foxhound like a poet must be born; and, like a gentleman, it takes three generations to breed him. The poetry of form and the purity of birth are only to be seen in old kennels; and many of those old kennels exist in out-of-the-way places. This brings in a note that the Meynell blood (perhaps

the oldest established and authenticated—for the Meynell Kennelbook goes back to 1818) has been prominently used by Lord Galway in recent years, as also the old and valuable strains from the kennels of Lord Portsmouth, Lord Yarboro', Mr. Parry, the Duke of Rutland, &c.

Lord Galway has four hunting days—Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday—and occasionally gives a Saturday byeday. Even this requires a wide extent of well-preserved country; but, in addition, he is able to lend all north of the river Torne to Lord Fitzwilliam—while the fen beyond Awkley and Misterton is practically useless. Foxes run over it occasionally, it is true; and the smooth grass holds a great scent. But the open drains are all wide and deep; and many of them quite unjumpable. We shall continue our notes best by glancing in turn at the district in which each of the four days is usually spent.

The Kennels, then, being about two miles outside Retford, are just on the border between the Clay and the Forest—the latter being the remains of old Sherwood Forest, including the Dukeries and the country up to Serlby Hall (the residence of the Master) near Bawtry. And this is the Monday ground. Once clear of the Dukeries, there are no very large coverts; but Mr. Foljambe has two or three strong places at Osberton, *e.g.*, Manton Plantation and Scofton Wood. From Osberton to Bawtry the country is all open, with small coverts here and there; and the whole is a light sandy soil, whereon scent is very uncertain. The enclosures are large,

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and the fences only low quickset without a ditch. There is, indeed, nothing to stop a horse if hounds run, except want of pace; and pace is therefore his first requisite. The Dukeries may either lead to a run out here, to a turn in the kindred woodlands of the Rufford, or to remaining in the same neighbourhood all day. The ordinary meet for the Dukeries is Trueman's Lodge, which is situated just between Worksop and Clumber, and commands all three big places. Above this, Osberton is a frequent advertisement, for Mr. Foljambe's coverts; and Checker House generally points to the same. Scrooby Top House and Serlby are both for Lord Galway's nice little coverts. Blyth Law Hills are sandy rising ground, with some little covert upon them.

Tuesday is for the Doncaster side—from about Walling Wells up to Braithwell and Fossington round to Ankley and Misterton. Up to Rossington you ride chiefly over a limestone soil, with rough hedges and good ditches; but above this you get on to what is known in Yorkshire as "Car"—soft black ground with wide open drains, carrying a strong scent, but in wet weather often too deep and boggy to carry horse and rider. From Rossington to Edlington Wood (in Lord Fitzwilliam's country) is all Car, and is a very frequent line. The same kind of limestone plough is found round by Finningley, till again we get to car and fen—Finningley Park (Mr. Lister's), for Finningley Woods, being about the farthest meet. Maltby is usually the meet on the morning following the Leger; and Sandbeck Park (the seat of Lord Scarboro') is also generally fixed for the same week.

Maltby Ridings is a splendid wood of Lord Scarborough's, with great firm grass rides through it along which a carriage may be driven—every ride meeting at a common centre, whence each quarter of the wood can be seen. Stainton Village is a fixture for another strong wood of Lord Scarborough's adjoining—a beautiful covert, always full of foxes. Tickhall Spittal or Hesley Hall (Mr. Whitaker's), are for Hunster Wood, Martin Beck, and Swinnow Wood—also nice coverts. Rossington (Mr. Streatfield's) has the Low Woods on the border of the car; and North Carlton is for Walling Wells (the estate of Sir Thomas White and famous for foxes), and for the Firbeck coverts.

Thursday is as a rule devoted to the south-west or Derbyshire country; to which hounds are often taken by train: and which is also a limestone soil of tolerably light consistency. It has, however, more grass than the centre of the country and carries a better scent. As with the rest of The Grove, the more wet the stronger the scent, is here the rule. Indeed, the more mud your horse splashes about, the more likely are hounds to run. The fences hereabouts are mostly fair hedge-and-ditch; enclosures of medium size, and the grass is generally rough and course. Coalpits are worked all down the border—about Aston, Harthill, Clown, &c. Aston Hall (Mr. Verelst's) is a very favourite meet, to draw Brampton Gorse and Nicker Wood. A gallop from Aston across to Laughton Le Morthern is a frequent and pleasant occurrence, and takes them over a very sporting vale and a good deal of grass. Laughton, standing on a hill, is a promi-

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nent mark; and there is no covert till Throapham is reached—where is a common and a nice gorse. On the far west the river Rother bounds the country—only because beyond it the ground is too hilly and the collieries too frequent, to admit of pleasurable fox-hunting. Other meets on this side are Dinnington for Dinnington Gorse; Barlborough Hall, for some large and good woods of Mr. De Rhodes'; Steetley Bar, whence they go to Whitwell Wood (some two thousand acres belonging to the Duke of Portland, and having good grass rides radiating from the centre); Thorpe Salvin, for the covert there; and, occasionally Harthill, for Norwood (a fine covert of the Duke of Leeds').

Friday is on the Lincolnshire side of the Kennels, in what is always spoken of as The Clays, being a deep clay district between Retford and the Trent. It is only some twelve miles long by seven wide, and hounds often work their way through it all in a day. But Treswell Wood makes it fully able to bear one day every week; and the other coverts, though only small gorses and thorns, all stand their share. Treswell Wood belongs to Mr. Vernon of Grove Hall, who makes the stronghold so famous that it bears the name of "The Clay Nurseries." It supplies foxes enough for all the country-side; they are all stub-bred; but they soon learn to look upon the Wood as their chief refuge, and invariably run thither when found anywhere in the vale. It is about 150 acres in size, and its rides are very deep. Hounds are constantly in it, scattering the foxes abroad—from early cubhunting till late spring; and they meet for it at

Hall Grove about twice in three weeks throughout the season. From Grassthorpe in the south to Misterton in the north is the extent of the vale, the whole of which is made up of small enclosures stoutly fenced with stake-and-bound hedges and broad ditches. It rides soundest and best after heavy rain—and then it is also that hounds go quickest and you must have a strong horse and a powerful jumper. In wet weather it is better scenting ground than common. Darlton is a meet for all the far corner of the Vale; and from here they may draw Babington Springs, a nice ash covert. They have also a good gorse at Fledborough belonging to Lord Manvers, both coverts being under the charge of Mr. G. Billyard. Meeting at Sturton they go to a capital covert in Fenton Gorse, and to Rampton Thorns, both of which belong to Mr. Foljambe. Laneham Covert (blackthorn) was bought expressly for the Hunt by the late Duke of Portland. Gringley-on-the-Hill, on the north edge of the Vale, is for Gringley Gorse (the Duke of Portland's) and Walkeringham Thorns—from which there is every possibility of a fox taking them among the soft ground and open drains of the Car beyond.

THE WEST NORFOLK.*

THE extent of Norfolk over which Mr. Hamond might at the present moment hunt is practically only limited by distance from kennel and strength of establishment. His Country still remains The West Norfolk: but there is no other pack in the county; and the boundary-line only exists to mark where the former Lords Hasting hunted from Melton Constable, and in case their Hunt should be again revived. Thus, unhunted ground stretches away to the east till the sea is reached. On the other three sides are fen and seaboard, except where the Suffolk hounds draw on south border of Norfolk; and practically the West Norfolk country stands isolated—a slightly raised plateau of sound hunting ground above the half-encircling marsh and sea.

King's Lynn and Swaffham are its chief towns, each about three hours from London (Liverpool-street or St. Pancras). The kennels are at Great Massingham, about the centre of the country, on Mr. Hamond's own property, and about a dozen miles from either town.

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheets 11 and 17, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

It might be imagined that, Norfolk being essentially a shooting county, the interests of foxhunting would be looked upon not only as having no place, but as being absolutely antagonistic. On the contrary, foxes have every chance given them in Norfolk, are plentiful everywhere ; and, as there are lots of rabbits for them, they interfere but little with partridges or pheasants. Shooting undoubtedly holds great sway in the county : but the large proprietors are unselfish enough not to demand a monopoly, nor to wish to oust the pursuit which finds fun for the majority. Thus they encourage foxes, and are quite satisfied if in return their shooting arrangements are duly considered, and game not needlessly driven away on the eve of their beat. In Mr. Hamond's country a great part of the shooting—particularly in the centre—is left in the hands of the farmers, who are all keen foxhunters. In the majority of instances they farm several hundred or even a thousand acres ; and being obliged to ride something in order to get round their farms, they take care to provide themselves with useful young horses, which are generally worth double the money at five years old that they cost at two at Rugby or Horncastle. And an excellent school it is for educating a young one, especially on the light or upper country where the fences are small and easy, and teaching can commence at the rudiments. A young horse will always jump a big place when his blood is up, if he has acquired thorough confidence over small and varied fences. But he is likely enough to be made shy and shift, to say nothing of the chance of accident, if “outfaced” or terrified in his early efforts. All the

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Castle Rising and the Massingham district, and the Sandringham side, is of the easiest type—thorn fences on banks, with occasional small ditches, and sheep-hurdles everywhere: and the young farmers, in making their rounds, seldom go to the trouble of opening a gate. East of the Kennels, again, is a much more strongly fenced country—the banks are big, the ditches are double, and the thorn used to grow to great strength. Many of the old hedges have in recent years been cut and lowered; but still there is always enough growth to constitute a fence above the bank, and weak interstices are filled up with stout thorn wattle. From Watton up to Fakenham is all fenced in this way; and is a strong good soil, upon which grass freely intermingles with the plough. The light country of the west, on the contrary, is all light, flinty, arable—wild and open, with many acres of waste heath and gorse upon which rabbits flourish by hundreds. The land is scantily populated; and you may ride a bee line from the Kennels down to Hilborough with scarcely a cottage in view by the way. Towards Sandringham, too, there is nothing but light galloping over quite an open country. In the winter all the sheep are hurdled in their turnip-pens; there are no cattle to soil the ground; and with the surface thus sweet and clean, hounds have every chance in the lighter country. They want rain, and plenty of it. Given this, they will run well. The ground game may be puzzling to youthful noses; but there is so much of it that hounds seldom take long to acquire a proper sense of discrimination.

Sound, good, feet of course are very necessary for

hounds in the lighter part of the country, where flints most abound. And in this requisite Mr. Hamond's hounds are by no means deficient, while at the same time they are remarkable for bone and strength of limb. The pack has been in existence for fifteen years. It was first founded on drafts from Milton; received much assistance at the hands of Mr. Chaworth Musters (cousin to Mr. Hamond); and has since been maintained by constant return to the Fitzwilliam blood, and by infusions from the kennels of The Belvoir, Lord Coventry, Lord Fitzhardinge, &c.

The West Norfolk is, on the whole, quite a fair scenting country. Dry weather does not suit any of it, and least of all does it suit the light plough. But after plenty of wet, hounds can generally run over any part of it. Foxes, too, are ready enough to travel; for the coverts are but small, and the hills, such as merit the denomination, are long, sweeping, and unbroken—so that there is none of the temptation to a fox to turn and double that is offered by short steep hill-and-dale. The only large coverts are those of Lord Cholmondeley at Houghton—some fine woods just to the north of the kennels, and of great value for cub-hunting. They stand in the middle of the "light country," which elsewhere depends for its foxes as much upon its open heaths as on plantations or wooded coverts. The supply, as already mentioned, is good everywhere; and the enforced rest of two frosty winters has done much to assist the stock. Amid the wild heather of the west a fox is to be found at any moment. The gorse bushes and dry sand suit him just as well as they do the conies; and

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he is glad to make his bed with food always ready at hand.

Mr. Hamond hunts three days in the week—fixing his days and meets as most convenient to the country, local markets entering largely into the calculation. He seldom goes farther west (nor, indeed, would the fen allow him) than the Line between King's Lynn and Downham (or Stow Bardolph), nor farther south than Stow Ferry, Oxborough, Stanford, and Merton (Lord Walsingham's). Mr. Villebois of Marham, who was many years Master of the West Norfolk, assisted Mr. Hamond for several seasons after the latter's accession—by keeping up a pack to hunt the country south of King's Lynn and Swaffham.

The "light country," then, occupies the greater part of Mr. Hamond's territory; and in it you will want a well-bred, galloping horse—while for the eastern vale your mount must be a sturdy hunter, who has a leg to spare in difficulties, and whose back can lift him on to a bank and across a ditch. Massingham is surrounded by the former kind of ground, which reaches away almost to the sea. Foxes lie in the open heather all round the kennels; and they are found in plenty also at Rougham—where Mr. North has capital coverts and always sends a large contingent into the field. There are the gorse coverts, known as Cook's, Kendle's, Sewell's, Soigné and several others—some existing when the late Lord Leicester (Mr. Coke) hunted the country, and some are new. Hillington (Sir William Ffolke's) is another good meet and draw; and so is Anmer, where Mr. Coldham preserves as heartily as if he still hunted hard. Congham has many nice little

coverts; and Gayton, where Lord Romney shoots, is another good place. At Sandringham are many plantations and rough heaths, with one nice fox-covert in addition. From the latter hounds last season exemplified this side of the country to the full by running for two hours almost entirely over heaths—killing their fox. The rabbit holes of the light country, by the way, are a fruitful source of falls, even to the wariest. Other favourite resorts on this side are Narford, Middleton Towers (close to Lynn, and the residence of Sir Lewis Jarvis, who has three sons hunting), Ashwicken (Mr. Groom's), Hunstanton (where Mr. Le Strange has many foxes), and in the south, notably Marham (Mr. Villebois'). It should be mentioned that Lord Leicester owns some sixty thousand acres in the Hunt—over much of which the tenants are given the right of shooting, some also hire, and all do their best to further foxhunting.

The Vale, or strong country, runs up as above-mentioned from about Watton, taking in Necton, Bradenham, &c., up to Rainham and Fakenham in the north. Besides the places named (all of which, except the last, are sources of sport) there are good natural coverts at Pickenham, and the strongest wood of the district at Saham. Tittleshall, again, is another good meet in the Vale.

THE BEDALE.*

By no means the worst of the Yorkshire Countries are The Bedale and Lord Zetland's—which, by the way, have so many points in common that taking them in succession gives little room for any incisive comparison. Diffuse description of both would involve considerable repetition ; for much that may be said of The Bedale will naturally apply equally to Lord Zetland's. Both are divided pretty equally between low level vale, and hills rising into moorland. Both of them possess more grass than is found in the other countries of Yorkshire—their hills being almost entirely turf, and their vale mixed grazing land and plough. The fences, whether on hill or vale, are very similar with either Hunt—as we shall see : and the scenting properties in either territory are on the whole very much on a par.

The two countries occupy the north-west border of Yorkshire, take in the beds of the several rivers running along the foot of the hills that border on Westmoreland—and the fox is hunted as far up the latter as rock and moorland allow.

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 5, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

The Bedale, besides having the dales and forests of Westmoreland to back it up on the west, has the Hambledon Hills facing it on the east. Thus a channel is formed through which the rainfall of the upper ground rushes southward in several streams. All the lower country is in this way cut up and in some degree marred by the confluent rivers—no less than three of which (in addition to the Cod along its margin) run down the Bedale vale, to form the Ouse of the York-and-Ainsty. These three are the Wisk, the Swale, and the Yore. The first-named is just jumpable in places. But the other two are not; and the Swale running through the length of the country, has in a distance of twenty miles only three bridges, besides that of the railway—which is not available for hunting purposes. Foxes appear to swim the rivers like otters, and to make their points quite irrespective of the opposing streams. Hounds of course make no inquiry as to the propinquity of a bridge: and are generally over before it would be possible to stop them—even if desired. And thus, in the case of the Swale, the field is often left on one side, while fox and hounds go on beyond with the fun to themselves. Occasionally it has been a matter of difficulty for even the staff to recover the line of pursuit: and not very long ago the pack crossed the boundary and went a full hour's run into the York Country before they could be reached.

A curious old Roman Road, the Leeming Lane, also cuts through the country from north to south—Catterick Bridge to Borough Bridge—nearly side by side with the Swale. It turns neither right nor left,

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pursuing an almost equally unbending course—upwards through Lord Zetland's, and downwards through the York-and-Ainsty ; and a drive along it will lay before you the bulk of the two former countries. The Kennels are built beside it, about midway between Bedale and Scruton (the residence of the Master)—on a high point overlooking the vale to the east and the hills to the west. For, all to the east of Leeming Lane is lowland (heavy to the north, lighter to the south) ; and another narrow valley bears the railway, from Northallerton, between two ranges of hills to Leyburn—which is the farthest point whither hunting operations are purposely carried. The western line of demarcation, indeed, runs considerably inside the area coloured on Stanford's Map ; and, approximately speaking, may be drawn from Leyburn, by Middleham, to Masham, and from Masham to Skeldin and Eavestone. A fox might, no doubt, be run still farther westward ; but it would be difficult to find him, and occasionally hazardous to pursue where crags crop up and wooded precipices unexpectedly drop. The grass looks tempting, and the stonewalls seem built to jump ; but, the farther west we get, the more rugged becomes the hillsides and the more broken the beds of the stream, till the scene becomes more akin to the home of the chamois than of the fox. The stonewalls grow higher, stronger, and more frequent, as you rise from the low country and get more fully among the sheepwalks. Built of loose round stones, they are pleasant enough jumping as long as their dimensions keep within bounds. On the upper ground, again, there is always a scent—whether on

the grass or the highest moorland reached by hounds. The Vale, however, varies much in its scenting properties. The north—say, from above Scruton to Cowton—and on into the Hurworth—is stiff clay, chiefly under the plough, and irrigated, as it were, by the Swale and the Wisk. It carries a capital scent, and is looked upon as some of the best sporting ground in the Hunt. West of this (beyond Catterick and Leeming Lane) the ground becomes undulating and gradually hilly—till it merges into the western moorlands. The centre of the vale (Bedale, Gatenby, &c.) contains rather more grass, and is fair scenting ground. But as we work south, and touch the edge of the York-and-Ainsty, the country gets gradually lighter, the soil less capable of holding a scent, and the fences small, almost to insignificance. The fences of the Bedale Vale are nowhere very big or difficult; and are of the simple hedge-and-ditch type. But whereas in the north the hedges grow well, though clipped down to a level that interferes neither with your view of the hounds nor the safety of your neck, and the ditches are well dug—in the south the hedges would in most cases fail to stop a pony, and in many, indeed, would scarcely carry a poacher's snare. This is, as it happens, all to the disadvantage of the hounds and huntsman: for the largest fields of the week are on the York side. Small fences and a sandy weak-scenting soil are only too encouraging to a galloping field; giving the latter frequent opportunity of putting themselves between fox and hounds. As a general rule, the Bedale fields are anything but large; and, except in the south, fifty is almost an outside

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number. Most of these will be farmers—who, throughout the country, are keenly wedded to the sport. Resident and foxhunting landowners there are few—a great drawback to the country, and a difficulty of some consequence in the case of a subscription pack.

West of Ripon, we get again upon hills—a rough but sporting country, of moorland, grass, and stone-walls, which until the last year or two has not been much hunted, but which the present Master is striving hard to utilise. Its natural qualifications are sterling enough—if only local influence will, as is hoped, assist to develope them.

Major Dent has now had the country three seasons; and hunts the hounds himself. The present pack was founded in 1856 by Lord Feversham, who bought the Forfarshire Hounds, and added lots from Sir Richard Sutton's sale. Lord Feversham himself sold his hounds in 1867; but many of the best were purchased on behalf of the Bedale Hunt by Mr. J. B. Booth, the late master, and drafts from the Brocklesby and other Kennels obtained to make up the pack. Major Dent has recruited his Kennel largely from Lord Zetland's and Mr. Lane Fox's; and has gone to The Milton and The Belvoir for blood to cross with that at home. The Bedale Country, however, is of much older date. It originally formed part of the immense track hunted by The Raby Hounds, the property of the Earl of Darlington, who, about the year 1794, gave up the Badsworth and took the Raby Country (including the present Bedale). As a separate Hunt, the Bedale was originated by Mr.

Mark Milbank, of Thorp Perron, near Bedale, in 1832.

The coverts of The Bedale are all either whins or natural and comparatively small woods and plantations. There are no strong woodlands in the Hunt; and the only exception to the rule of small coverts is in the case of the Duke of Leeds' fine woods at Hornby—which, however, have hitherto only been open to the hounds after early shooting. Hornby is a beautiful place situated on a brow of undulating ground, looking across to the Kennels at a few miles' distance.

The town of Bedale in the centre, or Thirsk and Northallerton on the eastern boundary, are the choice of quarters for an intending visitor. The two latter are on the main line of the North-Eastern Railway; and are about five hours from London (*via* York, and King's Cross or St. Pancras). The horse the visitor should bring may perhaps be gathered from the foregoings. Short legs and strong back are desirable; and it is better that the animal should jump within himself than fling too far and freely.

Major Dent hunts three days a week—for which his country is more than ample. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday are his days, distributed much as follows—Monday is usually for the centre of the country; and Bedale ($3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from The Kennels) has for years been the first advertised meet of the season), to draw the Bedale Woods (the property of Sir Henry Beresford Peirse). The Leases (the site of the Kennels—the chief claim of which, by the way, to be in keeping with the Hunt must rest solely upon

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their antiquity) is also a frequent meet. So is Scruton Hall, where there are many nice plantations, and a good covert on the property. Newton House is a favourite fixture; and is the seat of Mr. W. D. Russell, a very staunch preserver, who has several small coverts, besides Gatenby Wood and its adjoining whin. Patrick Brompton is another place of meeting; and to the west they get to Leyburn and a higher and wilder country.

Wednesday is for the south—the farthest and chief meet being Kirby Hill or Kirby Windmill. From here hounds either draw westward by Marton-le-Moor and Devonshire Wood (all Mr. Clare Vyner's) or eastward by Milby Whin, and the small woods at Cundall and Leckby—in both cases being accompanied by a large field over the light vale. Meeting at Studley (Lord Ripon's) they take the other side of the Yore, and seek a fox by the banks of streams and the wooded glens which intersect a wild but very possible hunting country. There is covert for miles along the little river Laver; and at Spa Gill—whither Fountains Abbey draws as many sight-seers from Harrogate in the summer as a meet at Studley does in the winter. For a second fox—or a first as the case may be—they work on homewards over quite a goodly hill-country by Azerley; Baldersby also (Lady Down's) is frequently fixed for the lighter part of the vale, for the coverts there and for Hutton Moor; after which they may draw up to Norton Conyers (the ancient seat of the Graham family). Or, again, meeting at Norton Conyers they may draw the converse way, finishing at Baldersby.

Friday is for the north of the country—the pith of which is the stiff clay vale, through which run the Swale and the Wisk, with many minor streams and stells (large open drains)—all of which are too frequently full to overflowing, rendering the ground deep and holding. Of the meets here Scorton is in great favour—close to it being Uckerby Whin, from which many and good runs have of late been constantly scored. Near Kiplin Hall Capt. Carpenter has just founded a new whin of great promise. Pepper Hall is a favourite meet; and Langdon Hall (Mr. Elliott's) has plantations full of foxes, besides Thrintoft Whin. At Hunton Bonville (Mr. Hillyard's) are several small but good detached plantations and a whin, on the border adjoining the Hurworth. For the higher ground Catterick, Hipswell, and Scotton often figure among the advertisements; and there are good coverts on the hills opposite Richmond.

LORD ZETLAND'S.*

THE country now hunted by the Earl of Zetland is the home portion of the immense area which, during the latter part of last century and the early part of the present, constituted the celebrated Raby Country of the Earl of Darlington (afterwards Duke of Cleveland). Raby Castle, the Ducal residence, stands in the heart of Lord Zetland's territory; and the old Raby pack not only took in the ground of the present Bedale in the south, but in the north worked much farther into Durham—where there were then, of course, none of the railways now slashing and cutting the face of the county into so many minute slices. Nor, on the other hand, did the iron horse exist to whisk hounds down to their far distant meets: and how the old Earl could cover such a vast extent of country, even with a most lavish expenditure, is a very marvel.

Lord Zetland's Kennels are at his beautiful seat, Aske Park, near Richmond, on the southern borders of his existing country—which embraces the extreme north-west of Yorkshire and the south-west corner of

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 5, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

Durham. The river Tees divides the two counties, almost bisects the Hunt, and here and there does no little mischief by its presence—with its wooded, rocky, and dangerous banks, among which hounds can often scarcely get about, much less force a fox away. Aske is on the edge of what are here known as the Yorkshire Hills, and overhang the vale running up the east of the country—much as farther north Raby Castle is between the Durham Hills and the Durham Vale.

A continuation of the Bedale, Lord Zetland's Country runs along the side and base of the moorland hills with which Westmoreland encroaches upon Yorkshire. The same grassy slopes, the same heathery summits, and the same well-watered plain, are common to both. More use is, perhaps, made of the wild good-scenting moorlands of the latter: but in the main the two countries are very similar. Lord Zetland's has none of the light sandy plough into which The Bedale drifts in the far south. His vale is nearly all the same as the best of the Bedale low country (mixed grass and plough—the latter predominating): and the fences also are much alike—easy hedge-and-ditch, occasionally, but not often, on low banks. The hedges grow wild and unkempt; but are seldom of formidable strength. Timber is but little used; gaps being generally made up, where such labour is considered necessary, with wattle and thorns. You will have a great deal of jumping; and every opportunity of making a horse clever, without trying him too high. The jumps are such as an ordinary hunter will make light of. The clay of the

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vale is also more than "fair scenting ground," and hounds that can work will seldom fail to make their way over it. At the same time it can scarcely be termed a "flying country," either for horse or hound—though in a favourable season (with plenty of rain) hounds will often run hard. Staindrop across to Aycliffe is especially fine vale. As you rise from the vale on to the lower undulations of the hills, grass becomes more prevalent and by degrees altogether takes the place of tillage; the hedges grow higher and stronger; stone walls come in and ditches go out; till gradually walls alone mark the enclosures. The grass is rough and soft, and almost always holds a scent: while the heather and moor above hold a better still—and hunting may here go on into the spring as late as would be possible, and fair, anywhere. On the upper ground a rider should know his way about; for in the roughest and stiffest parts there may be rocks and other impediments to circumvent, and the stonewalls themselves are not always negotiable. On the whole, though, Lord Zetland's is a most pleasant riding, and good hunting, country—with plenty of foxes everywhere, and records of sport of recent years that will bear comparison with that of any Hunt. The hills are seldom steep enough to make riding difficult: and, indeed, are very popular ground. There is always a scent on them; and, as there are no strong woodlands in the country, most of the cub-hunting has to be done on the moors—where plantations and ling (heather) find ample shelter for the hardy race of foxes there to be found.

Nearly all the Durham side of the country is the

property of the Duke of Cleveland; and it is in the Durham vale that the largest fields are seen with hounds—though the number even here seldom exceeds fifty or sixty horsemen. As with the Bedale, the resident gentry who hunt are comparatively few—though the farmers are fond of the chase, and, even when unable to take part in it, are very liberal in walking puppies for the Hunt. The strongest meets (such as those at Heighington and Piercebridge) are made up by an influx of strangers, either by train from north and south, or from the two neighbouring Hunts, The South Durham and The Hurworth. The little town of Croft, on the border of the latter, is a very favourite and convenient resort. From it hounds can be reached by road six days in the week; and variety is offered by four packs, viz., The Hurworth, Lord Zetland's, The Bedale, and The South Durham—such choice and such easy distances being attainable nowhere else except at Melton Mowbray. Darlington (on the main line and about five hours from King's Cross or St. Pancras) is another good resting-place, on the junction-point of Lord Zetland's, The Hurworth, and The South Durham: while Richmond, on the boundary between Lord Zetland's and The Bedale, should be a charming station for the soldiers who are fortunate enough to be quartered at its imposing new Barracks.

Lord Zetland has owned hounds for six years; and has now an excellent pack. To Mr. Cradock belongs the credit of founding it—some fifteen years ago: and the materials came chiefly from the kennels of Lord Portsmouth, Lord Henry Bentinck, The Milton,

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The Bramham Moor, and Mr. Parry. But par excellence the father of the present kennel is a hound named Wanderer (by Lord Poltimore's Woldsman out of Lord Portsmouth's Hasty) who was entered in 1870—having been brought from the west of England by Mr. Cradock at the time of Lord Poltimore's famous sale. The old hound is still in this year 1881 enjoying a luxurious, if decrepit, old age among the strawricks and outbuildings adjoining the kennels. Besides Wanderer and a worthy son of his, Warrior, at home, Lord Zetland has of late gone very largely to Belvoir and Milton—with the best results.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday are the hunting days ; which are arranged about as follows—

Monday is generally round home, chiefly on the Yorkshire Hills, and taking in but little of the vale. The chances are, indeed, that you will be among grass and stonewalls all day. Among the principal Monday meets are Hartforth Hall (the residence of Mr. Cradock, the late master), to draw the good coverts on the estate and afterwards Gilling Wood (Mr. Wharton's). To follow these are Lord Zetland's nice plantations and small woods. Meeting at Aske itself, they probably get to the Easby coverts—also small woods, belonging to Mr. Jacques. Other good fixtures are Barningham (Mr. Milbank's) on the banks of the Greta ; while Greta Bridge is for the Brignall Banks (Mr. Morritt's). Forcett also is frequently named.

Tuesday gets the cream of the Durham Vale. Very deep when wet, it is yet at its best for sport after plenty of rain. Unfortunately it depends mainly on

gorse for its coverts : and almost all the gorse coverts are at the present moment laid waste by the severe frosts of the last two winters. Piercebridge is a very leading meet—with Fanny Barks, and several little gorses, to draw. Heighington, too, is a very attractive feature — with Redworth Whin, Sim Pastures, Wilkinson's Whin, and the Greystones Whin, all good gorse coverts. Selaby is for the Selaby Woods ; and Legs Across, on a little eminence above the level of the vale, has the gorse of Toytot, and the plantation and whin of Trundlemire. The coverts in this district are all quite small—the Houghton Plantations, which may be reached from nearly any Tuesday meet, being the largest. There are, by the way, but few water jumps—properly so called, either in the Tuesday country, or elsewhere in the Hunt, though broken and often wooded streams are frequent.

Thursday is usually for the Yorkshire Vale—Halnaby way, so to define it—perhaps the stiffest country to ride over in the Hunt. Among the meets is Manfield, for the whin of that name—a nice covert. Cliffe (where lives Col. Wilson) has the Cliffe Woods. Halnaby (Mr. Wilson Todd's) is for the Halnaby and Clavaux coverts (most useful little woods). Stanwick Park, the residence of the Duchess of Northumberland, has coverts round it ; Sedbury (Mr. Gilpin Brown's), with its plantations and privet, is quite a nursery for foxes ; and Middleton Lodge (Mr. Backhouse's) is another meet to be noted.

On a Saturday hounds are taken to the far end of the country—to the west of Barnard Castle and Raby

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Park. The Black Banks, on the course of the Weir, and on the extreme edge of the country, are quite a feature in this district—forming a chain of tremendously strong covert. It is altogether a rough wild tract—with heather, bogs, rocks, and riverbeds. The Tees in its higher and earlier stages is peculiarly crude and rocky. There are few regular coverts of any size. Foxes lie in the heather, in the wood fringing the streams, or in the occasional straggling moor hedges. Marwood is the meet for the Tees Banks; and Kinninvie for such coverts as the little woods of Hollandside, Paddock, and Hough Gill. On Tuesdays and Saturdays, it should have been mentioned, the hounds have to be vanned—to the distant meets beyond the Tees.

THE CRAVEN.*

FROM the Hampshire Down of The Vine and Tedworth on the south—to the Lambourne and Isley Downs (and the Old Berkshire and Vale of White Horse Countries) on the north, maps out the latitude of The Craven. The South Berkshire and the Duke of Beaufort's bound east and west respectively—Newbury being on its eastern border, Marlborough close to its western—joined one to the other by the Old Bath Road. When we add that there are Downs again at the latter place, it might easily be supposed that the Craven Country is down, and nothing but down. It certainly owns to a good deal of it; but it has also a belt of "London clay" along its southern border, and a great deal of light plough cast over the whole centre of the country. The Bath Road cuts off the clay district at the foot of the Hampshire Hills, and has the Great Western Railway and the river Kennett running side by side with it the greater part of the way from Newbury to Marlborough. North of the Old Road the ground grows gradually lighter till the higher grass level is reached, and we rise from

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 15, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

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flinty tillage to mossy sheepwalk. On the lower ground, and wherever the plough has been at work, it is a case of noses-down and steady hunting always. The clay carries the better scent, but seldom one at all approaching brilliancy. Nor are the downs to be galloped *every* day. When there is a scent upon them, hounds fly as they do on the Southdown hills, and burst up their fox in from twenty to five-and-thirty minutes. The gorses being small and handy, hounds can be slipped away on their fox's back—and he never gets a moment to catch his second wind. Taken as a whole, though, the Craven must be spoken of as a cold-scenting country; and its attributes generally are scarcely of a type to raise it above the level of "provincial." This character applies, of course, to the Craven as a country, not as a Hunt: for as a Hunt it has always been maintained on a high footing. Some few years ago the members of the Hunt subscribed to build excellent Kennels and stabling on the present site—which came into Sir Richard Sutton's hands with his present estate at Benham. Sir Richard is commencing his second season of Mastership—having taken the country in 1880, and brought thither the bulk of the establishment with which Lord Spencer had been hunting the Pytchley woodlands, to wit, huntsman, feeder, some twenty-five couple of hounds, with five horses and saddlery, &c. His Kennel, therefore, contains much the same blood as is to be found among the present Pytchley; while in the existing and lately created Craven pack that he found on his arrival, there was, with other material, much from the Quorn Kennel.

Altogether the pack last season numbered sixty couple; and, with a quantity of puppies beyond the average out at walk, there is little doubt that it will rise rather than descend in the scale. The men are mounted not only suitably for the country, but with a liberality and judgment that would meet requirements much higher than likely to be exacted here.

Speaking generally, little is demanded of a horse in the Craven country beyond that he should be able to gallop on the level, and scramble over a rotten bank. On the downs he will have nothing at all to jump (with the rare exception of a small stake and bound) but will often have to extend himself for a bursting gallop. In the middle country the fences are no more tended and kept intact than amid the half enclosed ploughs of The Vine, Tedworth or H. H. In the vale he will have to encounter small banks, which probably crumble away as he is climbing over—leading often to his suspension midway or to a harmless roll on the other side. An evil phase of fence-making has, however, come much into vogue of recent years in the Craven country—to wit, *wire*, in its worst form. It is not even set up broadly and ostentatiously with a line of posts, as in the Shires: but is twined through the tops of thorns—turning the almost contemptible little hedge into a cruel and dangerous trap. Of course wire has not yet become by any means general; but it is already too frequent to be pleasant—and a country that of itself is by no means a horseman's paradise, is thus endowed with a most untempting characteristic.

If we must allude to another drawback, it is one

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affecting hounds—and consequently of dire importance to those whose task it is to find them and to keep them in health. We mean the flints, which lie so thickly over the whole country. If the palm is to be given anywhere for quantity, it is perhaps due to the Ramsbury district, where you could scarcely drive the tine of a fork into the ground without its ringing against a loose sharp flint. But they are most to be dreaded on the downs, where they are often half embedded in the turf, with firm keen edges above the ground to cut a hound's foot or leg like a knife.

There are not many big coverts in the Craven country as at present defined. Perhaps the largest are the woods of Chaddleworth and Welford (in the middle of the Hunt), with Aldbourn Chase, and, in the extreme south, Pen Wood. The latter is a great boggy place, wherein it is almost dangerous to leave one ride to make a short cut to another. On the downs you find only nice small gorses, where a fox can neither dwell when found, nor rest when tired.

The Downs, which run round all the north of the country, may be said to commence about Ilsley and Catmore, and continue by Woolley Park, Lambourne, Russley and Marlborough—the country shelving downwards thence past the Kennels (which are at Walcot, close to Kintbury Station) till it reaches its lowest at the foot of the hills on which stand Buttermere Combe, &c. Along this southern boundary-line there are various neutral coverts—for instance, Buttermere Gorse and Combe Wood—drawn conjointly with The Tedworth; and the woods of Dairyhouse, Tuthanger, and Fro Park with The Vine.

The best attended meets are generally those near Newbury, which bring in the South Berkshire men; while the Down meets attract many from The Old Berkshire; and the Rockley side, again, will often tempt some from The Duke of Beaufort's. But on no occasion are the Craven fields really large.

Savernake Forest is no longer hunted by The Craven, as the maps referred to would lead one to suppose; but its wooded and well rided depths provide sport for The Tedworth in autumn (when they go there for a continuous fortnight), winter, and spring. The Craven often find themselves in it—as they meet on two sides of it. Mildenhall, for instance, is only just outside; and a fox from the Borders is as likely to cross the Kennett and make his way into the Forest as to mount the hill and embark on a trial of speed across the Marlborough Downs.

The Kennels are admirably situated to command the country; and we may well take them as a central point in fixing the whereabouts of some of the chief meets.

Sir Richard Sutton hunts four days a week—Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, which, with occasional variation are generally distributed as under:

Monday is probably near at home, or to the south of the Kennels and of the Bath Road. Benham Park—the residence of the Master and three miles from Kennels—is often named. It has many coverts, and of course many foxes—among the former being Scots Wood, Wickham Heath, &c. Hamstead Park is another fixture; and Stype Wood (Rev. H. Mitchell's)

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often leads into the Forest of Savernake. From Woodhay House they draw over common and through wild, rough, scattered covert—often amid bogs whose peaty surface bends and shakes under the footfall like Irish snipe-ground. Sometimes when the south of the country has been worked hard, Wickham Five Bells may be named as a Monday meet. From here they get Norbyns Wood, Winding Wood, and Heathanger, or else have Benham and its coverts.

Wednesday is always for the Sidmonton side—to avoid clashing with Newbury market, which is on a Thursday, when hounds accordingly go far away to the west. Sidmonton Brick-kiln is for the coverts neutral with the Vine, as above-mentioned; while working homewards, there are Adbury, Sandleford, &c., to be drawn. Blind Man's Gate is a fixture close to Pen Wood, which belongs to Lord Carnarvon. Three Legged Cross is for the same draw; the result of which, if a find, may lead over the hill into Vine or Tedworth territory. The meet named directly for the Sandleford district is usually Greenham.

Thursday being more often for the west of the country towards the outskirts of Savernake Forest—there is the meet of Ramsbury, with Blake's Wood and Aldbourn Chase (where covert follows covert), just on the verge of the Marlborough, or Ogbourne, Downs. When Aldbourn is advertised, the gorse is drawn, and the Chace comes after. Mildenhall is for the Mildenhall Borders (a number of timber and connected belts), with Rabley Wood to follow. Eastbury Park has a nice wood; and Preston Gate has the same in Marriage Hill. Nearer home are Welford

Woods (Mr. Eyre's), with Chaddleworth Woods (Mr. Wroughton's) adjoining.

Saturday is the day for the Downs—alternately on the Lambourn and the Ilsley side. In the former direction is Baydon, whence they often move off to Ashdown Park—which, again, is itself a meet, with two nice wood coverts. From Seven Barrows they get to Mr. Hippisley's small but wonderfully preserved coverts close to Lambourn Village, and thence to Letcombe Bowers. On the Downs, on the way to the latter, are several gorses, such as Eastbury Gorse, &c.; from which hounds can always start on good terms. Woolley Park, or Tinker's Corner, are for the small coverts at Woolley (where Mr. Wroughton has always many foxes). At Lockhinge Bottom is another staunch fox-preserved — Sir R. Lloyd Lindsay. Farnboro' is the fixture for Ilsley Down and the good gorse coverts thereabouts. From Peasemore (just below the down) they draw the very useful woods of Breedon Park (Mr. King's); and go on, perhaps, to the small but favourite coverts at Langley—Ooreburgh and Prior's Court. From Hermitage (the most southerly of the Saturday meets) they are likely to work on to Catmore Borders.

THE SURREY UNION.*

SURREY no longer presents the same facilities for the London Nimrod as in the days when Mr. Jorrocks looked upon Surrey as the peculiar province of cockneys. "Surburban villany" has grasped half the hunting ground of The Surrey Union and the Old Surrey: and the red rover has been driven to regions only attainable by the help of the steam covert-hack, by those who would breakfast in Town. Not only that—but, unless ready to bear his fair share of the burden of the day, the Londoner is not told where he can calculate on finding hounds. Rightly enough, it is considered that the hunting field was never intended as a mere outlet for irresponsible mischief; and, accordingly, it is expected that the shareholders in the fun should be limited to the shareholders in its maintenance and expense. And so, like various other packs in the immediate neighbourhood of London, the Surrey Union adopts a plan, which, ere long, will probably become universal—and declines to advertise its meets to the world at large. No doubt, though, a reasonable subscription will at all times insure due

* *Vide* Stanford's "Hunting Map," Sheet 22, and Hobson's Foxhunting Atlas.

notice by post, and enable the London sportsman to put himself in the train at Waterloo, Victoria, or London Bridge at an hour not more inconvenient than if he had ten miles to canter. That many to whom business is first, Pleasure an after consideration, do avail themselves of the chance, is shown by the number of horse-boxes and pink coats conveyed by the morning trains every Saturday during the hunting season. The Surrey Union (and other Hunts who have supporters in London) make their arrangements to chime in with—rather than to thwart—the Saturday exodus. Thus every meet of the Surrey Union on that day is in easy reach of Epsom, Leatherhead, or Weybridge—each of which, again, is within a forty minutes' journey from Waterloo. On the other two hunting-days (Tuesday and Thursday), the train may be utilised to Leatherhead, Dorking, Baynards, or Guildford—as the case may be.

The Surrey Union Country, as now hunted, falls considerably short of the area it is entitled to occupy. Stanford's Map, however, shows pretty accurately the extent to which operations are at present carried. From Guildford to Reigate is its breadth. The prettiest bit of the country is the strip through which the railway runs as it passes Ewell on its way to Epsom—and this is about the nearest point to London where the Surrey Union hounds are ever seen. Mr. Richard Combe hunts that corner of their country which formerly took them up to Aldershot Camp; and at one time they used to work some of the ground now occupied by Mr. Godman. Even now the Surrey Union is quite an extensive Country for three days a

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week ; and it is only by railing the hounds to covert that the woods and clay of the southern weald can be utilised.

A ridge of chalk and grassy down runs from Guildford to Dorking, and round the eastern edge of the country by Walton, Epsom and Banstead. Within this half circle, to the north, all is a rather cold-scenting plough—lighter where the ground is higher, but heavier in the valleys such as the neighbourhood of Cobham, Wisley, and Ripley. South of the Guildford and Dorking ridge you drop at once into a deep clay, amid strong woods and a better scent. There are some great coverts, too, in the north—notably, the Prince's Woods and St. George's Hill. The former belongs to the Crown : and is believed to have received its name when the Prince de Joinville and the Duc d'Aumale resided at Claremont, and had the sporting rights of the adjoining woods. At the present day there is said to be a special clause in the lease, making a condition of the holding that foxes are always to be forthcoming to meet the requirements of the Surrey Union Hunt. No such condition would be necessary with the present tenant ; but it is a satisfactory instance of foxhunting being still held in high places as *The Sport of Kings*. Deep and wide are the Prince's Woods—and many a time has the London sportsman been condemned to spend the whole of his Saturday outing amid their holding rides and vast extent. St. George's Hill, again, is a rough stretch of heather and plantation, reaching from Cobham nearly to Weybridge. Deer abound in it—the story going that some years ago a German in

the neighbourhood bought himself half a dozen deer, extemporised a paddock of sheep hurdles, and next morning was surprised to find his herd had disappeared. Since then they have increased to such an extent that there must be at least a couple of hundred in this wild tract: and, as it is often impossible for whips to get at hounds amid its bogs and thickets, there is great difficulty in keeping the youngsters of the pack from riot.

A great deal of the Surrey Union Country is very much the same, to ride over, as the Crawley and Horsham (already described)—chiefly ploughed fields of limited size, divided by straggling fences often built on a bank. This especially applies to the northern half of the country; where a horse's chief merit is to be able to scramble cleverly and to take things quietly and untiringly. On the downs he will be going on the top of the ground; and may have to gallop. But considerably more is required of him in the stiff clay weald in the south of the country. Here the fences grow strong on the top of high banks—with a deep ditch on one side, or even both. There are few gates, in the ordinary acceptance of the term; but the farmers get from field to field by means of draw-rails, as in Sussex. Here the name for them is heave-gates; and, though they are of the stiffest timber, men accustomed to the country jump them readily, and often in preference to the bank-and-fence alongside. Again, there is often a good scent in this southern, or Cranleigh, country; so that, as the inclosures are quite small, and there is little time for dismounting to lower the heave-gates, a man who

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would ride to hounds must be continually on the jump. A horse for this part of the country must be a strong, clever fencer: and be able to gallop through dirt and to jump out of it.

The hounds are kennelled at Fetcham, close to the residence of the present Master, Mr. J. B. Hankey—whose grandfather and two uncles held the post before him. Mr. Hankey took office five years ago—succeeding Mr. Scott—and he then brought the pack back to its former Kennel near Fetcham Park. The Pack, though an old-established one (the property of the Hunt) has necessarily been chiefly maintained by drafts—the difficulty that exists with the Crawley and Horsham, and various other packs south of London, of getting a sufficiency of puppies reared at walk, being felt here. Thus in recent years The Surrey Union has been dependent chiefly upon the Meynell, Mr. Tailby, Lord Fitzhardinge, and the Puckeridge. To the first-named, however, they are indebted for a hound named Falkland, by whose help they have been successful in putting forward some most creditable homebred stock.

Foxes are fairly plentiful everywhere—except where in isolated cases the shooting interests may have been established by a non-resident and allowed by him to run counter to those of foxhunting. It is in this way, rather than by the presence of inconvenient numbers in the field, that the Hunt feels the neighbourhood of the metropolis. As a rule the residents in the Country do all in their power to welcome foxhunting and to forward its interests.

Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday being the three

days of hunting, Tuesday is generally occupied near home, and among its meets is Fetcham Downs. From here they take Norbury Park, the residence of Mr. Grissell, who, though never taking part in the chase except on foot, gives up his coverts entirely to foxes, and always has a great supply. From Leatherhead Downs, they work by Epsom to the Banstead coverts. Boxhill is another meet—for the great wooded hill of that name. Being a dry chalk height, it is in such favour with foxes that they are ever ready to accumulate here in great numbers. To find five or six brace on it is by no means uncommon; and to devote a whole day to routing them out is often a necessity. Margery Grove is the name of a meet and good covert close to Reigate, with a nice country all round, and every probability of a trip into Old Surrey territory. Another Tuesday meet is Wisley Heath, where they have heath and plantation to draw. From Ripley Green they go to Clandon Common. Clandon Park has beautiful coverts; and used to be a favourite resort. Bramble Ride and Hatchland's Park are two good draws. East Clandon is the usual fixture for the Norcotts.

Thursday almost always takes the Cranleigh and Ewhurst, or southern clay, country. These two places, indeed, are about the only meets in this district—each having large chains of woodland in its proximity. The foxes are wild and strong; and, when forced from the coverts, often go wide across the border over the vale. Hounds, too, can generally drive them through the woods, and force them, even if they cling to the woods, to run the rides at best pace. Meeting at Ewhurst, the usual routine is to draw Sir Trevor

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Lawrence's well preserved coverts, *e.g.* Somersbury, The Buildings, &c. ; while from Cranleigh they have Upper and Lower Canville, the property of Mr. Sadler, who owns also Bowles Rough and Fishpond. Near these are Longhurst Hill and Coxland (Mr. Thurlow's) — all being large woods almost continuously connected. For these meets hounds are always put on the rail to Baynards Station. A Thursday fixture too is Abinger Cross Roads, for the Pasture Wood (Mr. Evelyn), with some pleasant country and a good sprinkling of grass near.

Saturday takes in the north of the country—though there are some meets that may fall either on that day or on a Tuesday. Hawkshot Flat is always fixed for Saturday, with a view to The Prince's Woods—above described. Outside The Prince's, in the direction of Hook and Ewell, is nice fair hunting ground to Banstead, when a fox will take that direction. Fair-Mile is another equally frequent Saturday meet ; and, while probably meaning Claremont (close to Esher) for a start, is almost sure to lead eventually to The Prince's, or the other big woodlands of St. George's Hill.

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FIG. 1.

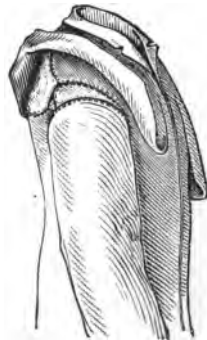


FIG. 2.

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